Rocket's Blast comicollector

NO. 148 $1.95

ALIEN conversations with DAN O'BANNON and RON COBB

Lancelot PERTWILLABY in King Arthur's court!

DON ROSA

THE MICRONAUTS--copyright 1979 Marvel Comics Group

RBCC 148

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Frontispiece by MICHAEL GOLDEN
Contents page by BRET BLEVINS
Back cover: A still from Dan O'Bannon's film ALIEN.

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BLEVINS 78

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APRIL 1979

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THE ROCKET'S BLAST COMICOLLECTOR is published by James Van Hise, 10885 Parkdale Avenue, San Diego, Cal. 92126 EDITOR & PUBLISHER: JAMES VAN HISE, EDITOR EMERITUS: GORDON B. LOVE
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THE ADVERTISING DEADLINES FOR THE NEXT TWO ISSUES OF THE RBCC ARE: MAY 15th
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AD DEADLINES ARE ALSO CONTRIBUTION DEADLINES!

Due to the many features in this issue, and their length, some things which were planned and ready to go were squeezed out. Things like the letter column, *COMICS COMMENTARY*, an additional page on *CRITIQUE* and even a ten page article by Howard Siegel on comics from 1956-67 with lots of illustrations by Bret Blevins and Bruce Zick. This article will appear instead next issue, but more on that issue in a moment.

Beginning last issue, the ad rates in the RBCC have been higher. This was done to try and absorb another printing increase without having to raise the subscription rates again. That's the good news. The bad news is that nearly all postal rates except first class are slated to be raised again this summer by the post office, so prepare for that eventuality.

The next RBCC, #149, will be my long promised *Special Animation Issue*. Really! The cover price of this special will be $2.50 but subscribers will receive it as a regular issue on their subscriptions. One thing making it special will be a *Full Color* wraparound cover by WENDY PINI based on the film WIZARDS, upon which there will also be a feature in that issue. There will also be features on FANTASIA, the 1940s Superman cartoons, the Puppetoons of George Pal and more.

Our special 150th issue is upcoming and you can be sure that unusual things are in store for that one! What? You want to know what? Only the contributors to that issue know for sure, and even they don't know about everything...

The STEVE FABIAN illo slated for this issue is in my hands but was bumped by the expanded feature on ALIEN, etc, and so I've decided to run the Fabian illo in the first issue of FANTASTIC EXPLOITS appearing in just a few weeks.

I know some of you out there would like to see a longer installment of *CRITIQUE* each issue, as would I, but since I'm the main reviewer and my time is limited, so is the column. What I need is a team of at least two of you out there who live near each other so that I could box up the zines I have piling up and send them to you for review. Anyone interested in applying for this send a couple sample reviews of any zine you might have so I can decide if you can handle this task, which is by no means a small one. All RBCC contributors receive free subscriptions.

* * *

If the lead feature, DESIGNING ALIEN CULTURES, looks impressive, it's only because an impressive amount of work went into it. DENNIS FISCHER, who provided us with the George Clayton Johnson interview last issue, interviewed DAN O'BANNON and RON COBB in January 1979 and those interviews total nearly twenty thousand words of conversations. They cover not only the early careers of these two very talented people, but also their involvement in the new science fiction film ALIEN, and this issue of RBCC honors not only all of the achievements of O'BANNON and COBB, but appearing as it does just a handful of weeks before ALIEN's release, we also feature previously unpublished preproduction artwork done for ALIEN (not all of which was used when making the film itself). I'm especially proud of this feature because, like many people, I've been an admirer of DAN O'BANNON's work since the release of DARK STAR in 1975, and in the case of RON COBB, although his name may be new to many of you, I've loved his work since I first saw his political cartoons in 1969! This feature is the most complete ot its kind on these two men yet published.

Accompanying DESIGNING ALIEN CULTURES is an appropriate introduction illo drawn by HILARY BARTA.

Next in line is a new regular feature in the RBCC, *THE MUTANT HANDBOOK*, an illustrated series on The X-Men written by KURT BUSIEK and illustrated by newcomer SCOTT McLEOD (whose work first appeared in the RBCC last issue).

More big news this issue comes in the form of the return of DON ROSA's wild adventure strip THE PERTWILLABY PAPERS, whose last appearance ended in RBCC #143. I can't begin to guess what he's going to blow up this time (remember the conclusions of the last three stories?).

EDDIE EDDINGS, of course, is at the artistic helm of DON ROSA's INFORMATION CENTER, fully capturing the Don Rosa spirit in his humorous illustrations. This installment of THE INFORMATION CENTER is dedicated to the memory of actor TED CASSIDY, who died in January of this year.

CRITIQUE is only four pages this issue again (I wanted it to be longer) but we still cover a lot and present more diversity than usual in the form of an interesting, yet probably controversial, review by George Olshevsky. You'll see.

DON ROSA presents the front cover on this issue, his first since RBCC #121.

R.C. HARVEY'S COMICOPIA has an extra long installment of "The Girls of Comicopia" spotlighting the work of MILTON CANIFF.

Special thanks this issue goes to CHARLIE LIPPINCOTT at Twentieth Century-Fox for coming through with the excellent production and preproduction material on ALIEN in time for this issue.

RBCC CONTRIBUTORS

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DESIGNING ALIEN CULTURES:

INTERVIEWS WITH DAN O'BANNON & RON COBB

CONDUCTED BY Dennis Fischer

Early in 1975 I discovered the work of two very creative visual artists. The work of one I discovered by going to a film that had the advertising subtitle: "The Spaced Odyssey". The other's work I uncovered by searching through back issues of The Freep (local slang term for the old Los Angeles Free Press). The works I found were often clever, humorous and imaginative, and I admired what I saw. In 1976, I heard on "Hour 25", the Los Angeles and Orange Counties' longest running science fiction talk show, that Dan O'Bannon, co-creator of the aforementioned film, was now working on a serious sf film called ALIEN. I saw cartoonist Ron Cobb's work cropping up in textbooks and counter-culture magazines. In 1977 I met both these persons and discovered that not only did they work together on DARK STAR and STAR WARS, but that they would work once again on an adult science fiction film that promised stupendous scares and visual delights.

This article is the culmination of a lot of time and effort to bring you the work of these men, who along with numerous others were involved in the making of three of the most important science fiction films of the '70's. That's saying a mouthful when one considers that in this decade we've seen SILENT RUNNING, A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE, SLEEPER, CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND and A BOY AND HIS DOG, (not to mention THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW.) Each of these films is unique and all are worthy of study, but let us get to the men behind those cameras and pencils who can give us a glimpse of how it is done.

My first interview was with Dan O'Bannon. Getting the green light in the midst of his busy schedule, I grabbed my tape recorder and my good friend Susan Fox (who had also admired Dan's work since DARK STAR) and we left for Dan's modestly furnished apartment. Greeting us at the door, he showed us in and offered us some apple juice, which we gratefully accepted and downed. Dan also showed us something of what he had completed on his novel and the article which appeared in CINEFANTASTIQUE on ALIEN. Unfortunately, due to legal hassles from Twentieth Century Fox, Dan was limited in what he could tell us about the film, but soon we settled down and I commenced firing questions.

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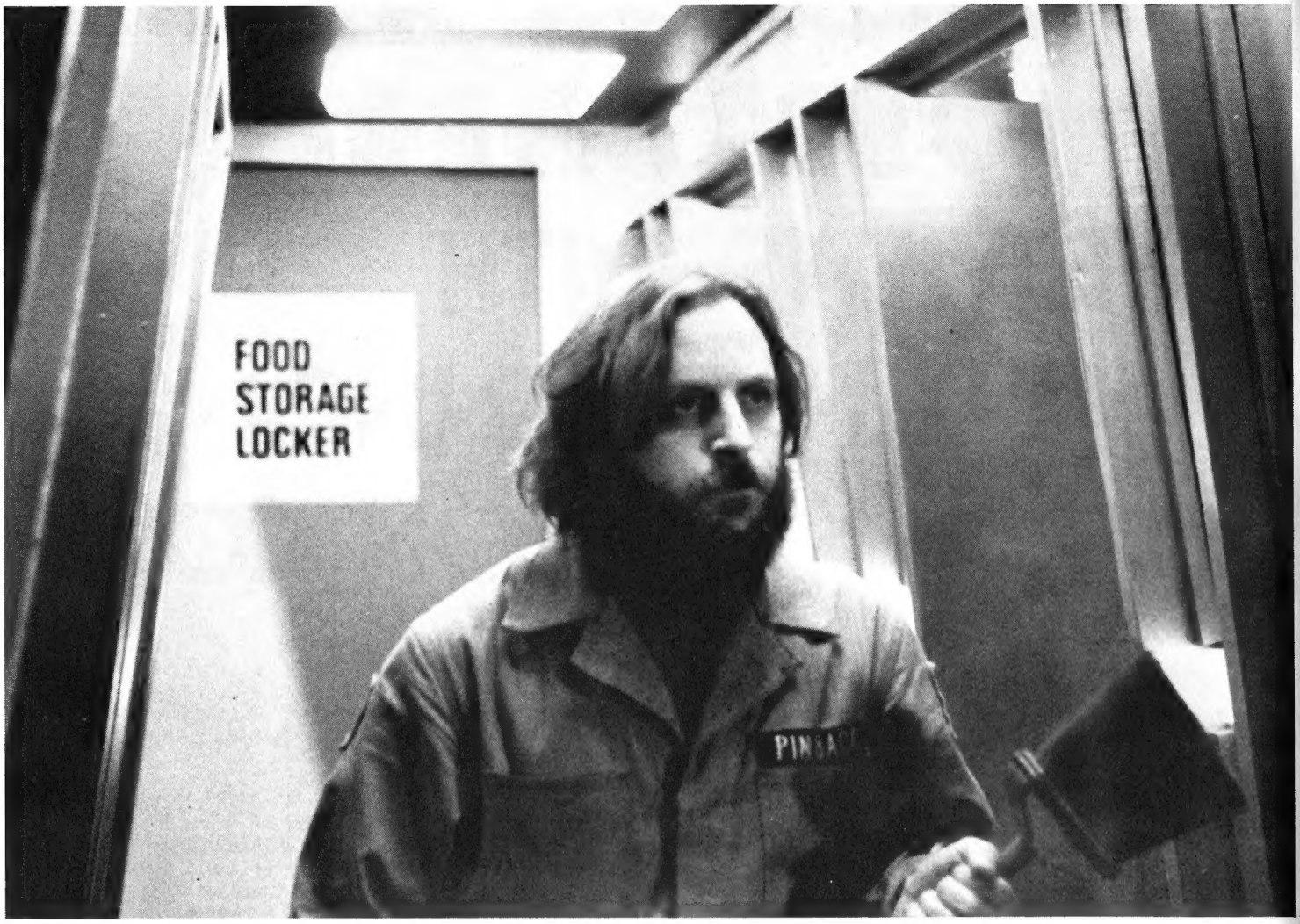
HOW DID DARK STAR COME TO BE?

As a USC (*University of Southern California*) film project in 1970. John Carpenter and I were at that time both in the film school there as 'SC. He approached me because he said he was going to do a science fiction film as a student project, and he asked me if I'd like to be involved in it, and I said, "Sure, I'd love to." And I got very heavily involved in it, so much so that it kind of got out of hand, really. What he originally visualized as a twenty minute black and white film ended up as a fifty minute color film, and it took just about two years to shoot it and get it done at 'SC. Just about the time we were finishing up editing on it, with what had been a very long and exciting and difficult road--just about when we thought we were finished--we were approached by a friend of ours named Jonathen Kaplan, who subsequently produced most of John Carpenter's movies (i.e. ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13). He was also in film school then and had a somewhat wealthy family, and he said that he would put in some additional money if we would expand it to a feature length.

So then we all had to butt our heads together and decided that means we have to pad it, you know, and like when right now we have a great student film, we may end up making it into maybe a mediocre feature film by padding it and putting it out onto the marketplace against professional products. But the decision finally came down to a choice between a great student film which would impress all the film schools, but would never be seen commercially, or a somewhat mediocre feature film that would be in theatres. So we opted for the feature.

I think it was the right decision because it did do more for us than it could have as a short. That point we launched into what amounted to another year and a half of very hard work, expanding it to feature length.



At the end of that time we discovered to our great disappointment that it was not as easy as we expected to sell a film in Hollywood, so we went through another fitfull period of trying to find distribution. By the time the feature had finally hit the theatres, four and a half years had passed since the film was conceived, and that was in the spring of 1975 when Bryanston Pictures released it. And that's sort of like a nutshell description.

HOW WAS THE STUDENT VERSION DIFFERENT FROM THE FINAL FILM?

Only in that the final film had a lot of scenes that were not in the original. Most of the middle of the final film is padding. The original story was quite clean, actually. It began with the first bomb run. It begins as it begins now. You see them bomb the first planet, you see their little discussions in the control room, and you see them set course for the second bombing and then it went directly to the end. The only scene between the first bomb run and the last bomb run, from the time they set course to the time they bomb the last planet, was the scene where Doolittle goes up and talks to Talby in the dome. After that they arrive and then the whole end is the same. Virtually all the stuff in the middle--the beachball monster, me chasing it around, scenes of Doolittle playing on his bottle organ, Pinback's diary--all of these things were added to make up the length. They were good things, but there's no question that inserting that material shattered the dramatic structure because it was conceptualized as a shorter piece. It was tighter and had a much straighter storyline, and when we expanded, it became to our regret a very episodic film, and so it lost something in the translation to a feature.

HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO FINANCE THE FILM?

The good part of the film, what still amounts to the bulk of the film and the best scenes of the film are the student parts of the film--all the bomb stuff, the big special effects, and that was done very cheaply because that was done at 'SC where things cost nothing. Because we were students, we were able to convince a lot of people, a lot of talented people, to work for us for nothing, to do it as a favor. So that was very cheap.

Then when we went out to put another half hour on it, we were doing things more commercially and suddenly things got a lot more expensive and we went through Jonathen Kaplan's ten grand pretty fast actually. Much faster than we expected from our previous experience. It was really quite out of proportion the extent of the price difference done for what we got, and we still ran out of money. We needed more. We ended up needing another thirty-five thousand dollars which we found from a producer named Jack Harris who put the money in that enabled us to reshoot some things that didn't look too good and to do a lot of complicated optical work when we got our prints.

He was supposed to originally distribute it because he had his own distribution company, and it was going to be distributed in the spring of 1974, but he changed his mind, which is why when we sold it to Bryanston there was a delay in the release. There wasn't a lot of money involved when you consider what

movies normally cost, but it was just a bloody fortune for people who are twenty-two years of age and in film school. It came in dribs and drabs--a great struggle.

HOW DID YOU FINALLY END UP GETTING IT DISTRIBUTED?

How do you mean?

WELL, TAKING AN INDEPENDENT FILM LIKE YOURS, NOT MADE BY ANY MAJOR COMPANY, WITH NO GUARANTEE OF DISTRIBUTION, AND ACTUALLY SELLING IT AS A FEATURE FILM.

Well, I think it was in the winter of '72 we started having screenings. This was after we had shot the old stuff. I think we must have run every major distributor in town through that little screening room up at Seaco, and the only person that made us an offer was Jack Harris. He was going to put in the completion money, make prints, and distribute it, and he did put in the completion money, but he didn't distribute it. He got scared and didn't know what to do with it. He found Bryanston and from that moment on we had no control over it. Bryanston chose their own campaign and did what they were going to do. That was really it. The answer was that we had to scrape the bottom of the barrel to find someone to distribute it for us.

DID YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH RAY BRADBURY BECAUSE OF THE "KALEIDOSCOPE"-LIKE ENDING?

Well, John always wanted to do that. I think that was the first thing he had in mind when he first told me he wanted to do a science fiction movie. That was he wanted to do Bradbury's story, "Kaleidoscope", except he wanted to have a guy surfing at the end of it, which was something I never liked until I was... I argued against it occasionally because I thought it would spoil the end of the movie, but I had to admit I was wrong. The audiences sure have liked it a lot. It gets a positive response when the guy surfs down.

Since it was his original conception, I said all right, it was his film, but I ran into Bradbury, I think it was a year ago. I went to see the "Martian Chronicles" where the play was being put on up in North Hollywood or the Valley, and after it there was Bradbury. Then the people I was with insisted on dragging me up and introducing me, and they said, "Mr. Bradbury, this is the guy that made DARK STAR." I kinda' didn't want to be introduced because I didn't know what to say about that--this was years after it all was out--but they did. They said, "This is Dan O'Bannon who made DARK STAR." He said, "Oh yes," and he shook my hand and I just said, "Why...I guess it's pretty obvious to you by now that, ah...we stole 'Kaleidoscope'." "Yes!" he said, "and that's why I've never seen it." Turned his back. And he's right, he's right. I just wish he said it to Carpenter.

BEFORE YOU ACTED AS PINBACK IN DARK STAR, YOU ALSO ACTED IN A FILM CALLED FOSTER'S RELEASE. WOULD YOU CARE TO TELL US ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?

A long time ago, student film days, that was the last film I acted in before DARK STAR that was in the summer of '70. That was just before Carpenter. As a matter of fact, I went up to San Francisco to act in that and when I got back, I think it was the first day back that Carpenter told me about this film idea of his.

FOSTER'S RELEASE was originally called JUDSON'S RELEASE and that was originally called THE BABYSITTER. Terry Winkless, who was a really hot student filmmaker-in those days he got promoted under the name "Filmfreak", decided to make a little Hitchcockian thriller about a babysitter who basically is entreated upon by an insane murderer/rapist, and a quite clever device was used with the telephone because he keeps placing obscene telephone calls and finally you discover he's calling from inside the very house.

They made it and it was good. While they were finishing it, some sleezo commercial distributor started hassling them because he was putting out a movie called THE BABYSITTER and had heard about it. It was just a student film and the other film was some jerk exploitation thing. But they found out about it and they started hassling the hell out of Winkless. "You're going to change the title or we'll sue you..." you know. So they came up with JUDSON'S RELEASE as the title, and I've never understood that title at all. I presume that the only character that could have been Judson was the character I played, and what his release was, I can't figure out unless it was the fact that the cops shot him to death in the end. But then Winkless had a chance to sell it to Pyramid films.

They said they'd buy it from him. There was only one problem, and that was that their catalogue had already been printed up and was just about to go out, and that meant that there was no place to put the film in their catalogue, except that another film was dropped, and it was some film that began with the letter "F", and they told Winkless that if he could change the name to some title beginning with "F" they would put the film in the catalog at that spot. So they changed it to FOSTER'S RELEASE, which is the story of the title of that film, which is pretty good. You oughta' call Winkless and see it.

WHAT OTHER FILMS DID YOU WORK ON BEFORE DARK STAR?

I think I cut my teeth on a film called THE ATTACK OF THE FIFTY FOOT CHICKEN, which is something I did in college. There was no film school, so I started a film production club and got involved in making this, and like many things that I've done in my life, it got out of hand. It became overlong and overelaborate. It was a parody of giant monster movies, and it just became more and more elaborate. I wrote the script, and I directed it, and I acted in it, and had to act as producer and get all the people together--the cameraman, actors, props, and so forth--do the costumes, do the make-up. It was very hard work, but I was young, I was 19, and I didn't finish it. I actually finished all the shooting, and I never finished editing and putting the sound on it. That is one of those failures, one of those things we don't like to talk about because it's your own fault. I actually have most of the film here in the closet.

It was right after that that I transfered to 'SC to their film department, and I started doing student films. Many of those things blur in your mind and are best forgotten, but I did make one thing called BLOODBATH, which I thought was kind of cute. It was a comedy about a man who cut his wrists and bled to death in a bathtub. It was very short and I remember I wanted to see just how far I could turn audiences' expectations back onto themselves. But it began as a very very funny comedy without any suggestions of what was to come, and when the character cuts his wrists and when I showed it, it had a very, very powerful reaction from the audience. I remember afterwards that when it started for the first ten minutes they were roaring, laughing, and I had them in the palm of my hand, but when he cut his wrist, dead silence fell over the room. There was not another sound till the end of the film, and I saw a couple of people get up and run out before the film was over. And afterwards, when they were asked for their comments, the general comments were, "Well, it was great until that stupid ending."

I thought about that and I learned two things from that. Number one, it had been powerfully effective because I had watched it hurt, and number two, it had depressed them so they ended up not liking it overall. But it was strong and I was thinking of finishing it and blowing it up to 35mm, just for my own amusement.

WHAT DID YOU DO AS HEAD OF SPECIAL EFFECTS ON DARK STAR?

Everything.

WELL, I'VE HEARD THAT JIM DANFORTH DID MATTE PAINTINGS AND RON COBB DESIGNED THE SPACESHIP AND A COUPLE OF PEOPLE (GREG JEIN AND HARRY WALTON) FINISHED IT, AND THERE WAS EXTENSIVE MATTE WORK. WHAT WAS DONE BY YOU?

Jim Danforth did about three or four very beautiful paintings for us that were used in the title sequence of the film. They are astronomical paintings. They show essentially planetscapes and nebula gas clouds, and those are used in the title sequence. He was gonna do a lot more, but couldn't get into it.

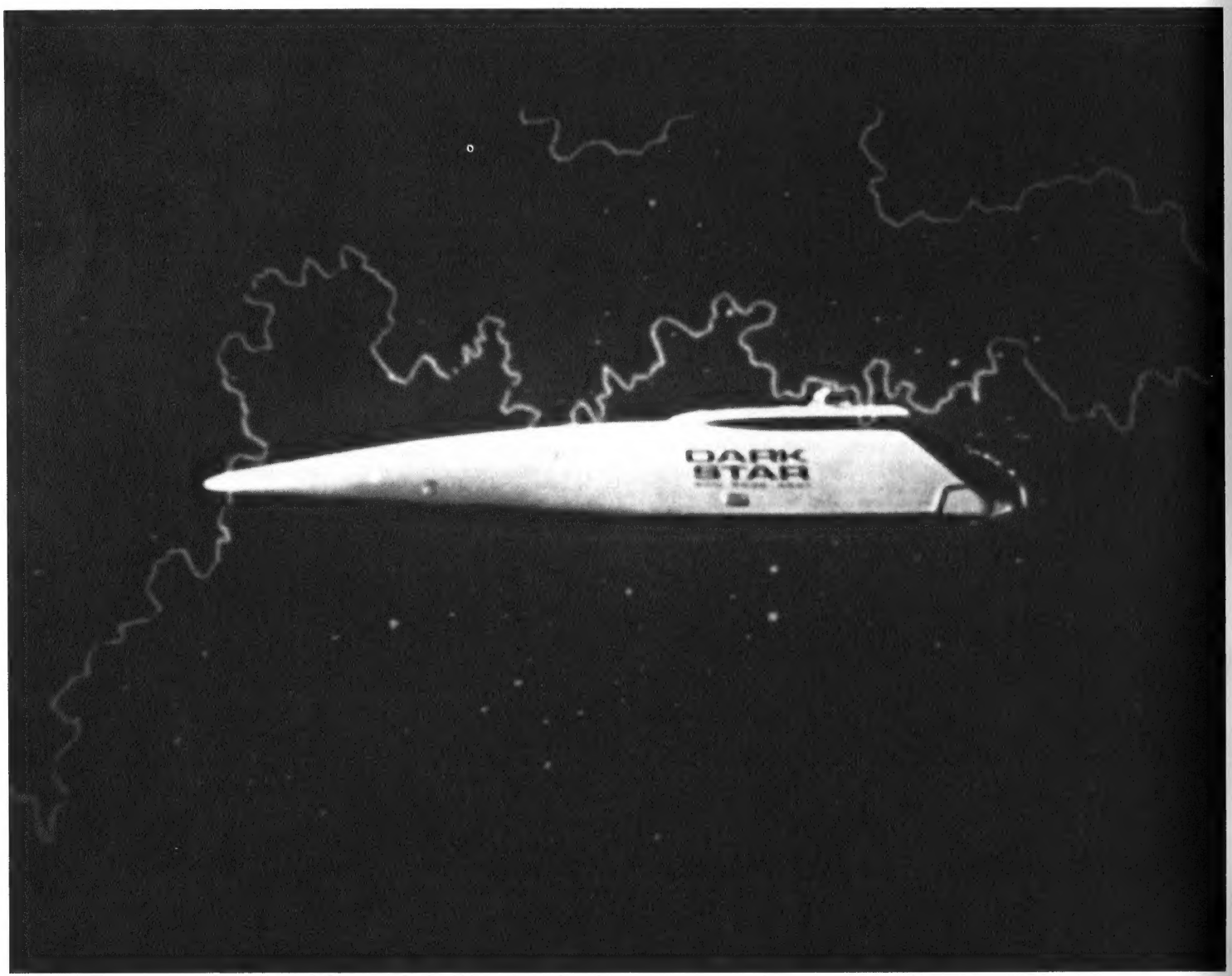
Ron Cobb designed the outside of the spaceship--the exterior design. We were well well into shooting before that was nailed down. I designed all of the interior sets, but I kept trying to nail down a good design on the spaceship and I was getting some of it all right, but I discovered Cobb's work and I had got to know him and I realized that he could do something far superior to anything I could do, so I kept trying to drag it out of him. At that time he was in a very non-productive period and he was on acid and speed all the time. Finally, one night when we couldn't wait any longer, Carpenter and I drove on over to Westwood and dragged poor Cobb out of his apartment at ten o'clock at night. He was shivering. He was coming off of LSD. We took him over to a coffee shop and sat him down and he proceeded to sketch a spaceship on a napkin in front of us, and I grabbed it out of his hand, went back and made it into big blueprints that became the outside of the ship. I designed everything else, visually that is, in the picture. Every set, every costume. I had a lot of help. Bob Greenberg and John Wash did an immense amount of animation themselves.

LIKE USING IT TO LIGHT LIGHTS ON YOUR MINIATURES?

That, and there was a lot of animation. There were many cases where we used animation to substitute for normal special effects because it was much cheaper and easier to move around bits of photographic artwork on an animation stand than move around three dimensional models. Wash and Greenberg did a lot of work on that. The final step, which was the blow-up to 35mm, had a lot of optical effects. That was all done by Bill Taylor who worked very very hard and is really a brilliant man. He was really a joy to work with, and he put a lot into that film visually. Other people did things. Greg Jein built the Dark Star model, the big one, but I built the bomb and all the other miniatures, and a fella named Harry Walton built the puppets that became the people, but I built the full-sized spacesuits that the puppets were based on. It was completely in my hands because John was essentially concerning himself exclusively with working with the cameraman and the actors, and I edited the picture.

HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THE "BEACHBALL" ALIEN CONCEPT?

We were trying...the beachball alien was part of the film that was padding. When we did the short, we never considered getting into a monster because we'd know it was out of our capacity, but once it was expanded, we



knew we had to come up with something, something that was different, something that was of interest. We started shooting and we kept trying to figure out how we could come up with a convincing and interesting looking monster, and we could not afford to have one built. We actually found an old monster suit that had been used in some old monster movie, and we rented it. What was the movie? It had Marshall Thompson...

WHAT..."IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE"?

No, it wasn't that. It wasn't as good as that one. We actually found it in a rental store in Hollywood. There was this rotting latex thing and we rented it. We thought maybe that would do it. We put our associate producer, Jon Kaplan, into it, and we got the footage back and it looked so dreadful, so despicable, it was not tolerable, but we were married to the concept of using an alien. We had been shooting scenes around it. Everything was based on it. We had to have one.

So while we were in the middle of this quandry, I was also setting up to do some planet exteriors. We needed a planet, so we said, "Kaplan, go get a planet." So we're on the soundstage, John and I, when Kaplan comes walking in with--what I requested was a large sphere on an axel so that way I could rotate it--Kaplan walks in with this giant beachball with two bathroom plungers glued to the side of it. It was so huge and he was behind it so that all you could see was this pair of legs on this huge bobbing, flopping balloon with these two arms flopping, and it walked into the soundstage and John and I immediately burst out into laughter and onto the floor laughing hysterically. It was the funniest thing we had ever seen. So we said, "Alright, that's it. That's got to be our monster because it looks so funny." And we made a couple of minor modifications. We found out that the sticks on the side didn't work, so they had to go, so we stuck a couple feet on it and gave it a paint job. That's how it came about. The process is called serendipity, isn't it? Where you look for one thing and find something else unexpectedly.

OTHER NICE TOUCHES WERE THE ELEVATOR SCENE, WHICH MUST HAVE BEEN QUITE COMPLEX TO SET UP, AND OF COURSE PINBACK'S DIARY.

Thank you. That elevator shaft scene...we thought it up and it sounded great. Harold Lloyd movies. You see when we shot that short, I'll never forget when we finished our cuts and sat down to look at it, we had a moment of real panic at the end of it. You see, this movie is all talk. Nothing physical ever happens in this movie. It's only about a bunch of people talking in rooms. A guy talking to bombs. It was all talk and no action. That disturbed us a lot, so when we decided to expand it, our first thought was to put some physical action in it and no gab, and we came up with the Harold Lloyd business of the person imperiled and dangling. We were going to shoot it in a real elevator shaft.

Carpenter said, "Will you do it?", and I said, "Sure, we'll get a rig around my waist. I don't care." I wasn't scared if we had a rig. He said, "alright. I wouldn't do it." I said, "Yeah, let's go find an elevator shaft." That's what we did. We went around buildings asking for an elevator shaft. That was when we discovered (I think it was because of that experience of going around trying to find an elevator shaft that somebody would let us use is why I don't ride in elevators today) how dangerous elevator shafts are and how dangerous elevators themselves are, and if you are underneath those things, there are steel cables that whip around and elevators can break and fall.

After we did a certain amount of inquiry on this, John said, "Are you still going to get under an elevator?" and I said, "No. Not a prayer. It's not just a question of hanging, that thing could kill me. Those cables could whip around my neck and cut my head off." And he said, "How are we going to do this. We're commited." Try to put on the thinking cap. Tick, tick tick, tick. And I said, "We'll do it sideways." That's what we did, we did it sideways. We built that long corridor and went through a whole lot of numbers trying to figure out camera angles to make it out. It just marginally works. It works just enough that you know what's happening, but not quite good enough that anybody's fooled. It works well enough.

I'VE HEARD PEOPLE CONVINCED THAT YOU WERE A GREAT ACROBAT.

(Laughs) I've heard a couple of people say that, but I've never believed them. I always thought they were buttering me up. Most people can spot it within about two or three cuts before they start realizing, "Ohhh, there's something funny." Of course, I can spot it every time.

WELL, YOU WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO BECAUSE YOU WERE ACTUALLY THERE.

I can see it when my hair sticks out backwards, when I do the impossible acrobatic stunts, things like that. It was kind of grim because the silver paint that we used to paint the inside of that shaft that we built was of such a nature that it never fully dried. So I spent about a week rolling around in silver paint--in wet silver paint on a concrete floor. If you have a chance to see it again, on the close-ups I have silver paint all over my face and hair and costume. It's not that easy to see. A lot of imperfections we got away with because the picture was in 16mm which has a low resolution of detail. So we got away with a lot of things we normally couldn't.

HOW DID THE PINBACK DIARY SCENE COME UP?

As a result of us sitting around thinking up every possible, imaginable way to pad. And then we wrote this scene and art will do that, okay, that's good, and we need another scene. So what could we do cheap and easy? One of the things we came up with that we could do cheap and easy was we figured we could squeeze upwards of five minutes of Pinback doing his own diary. That was how it came about. It sure wasn't done with expensive production values. It was a big sheet of transparent plastic strung up and a yellow light on it and a little box--I forgot where we got it. We acquired so much of our equipment from junkyards and things people were going to throw away. Somebody had an audio-visual filmstrip box and we grabbed that, set it down, said, "Okay, that's the screen he's looking at" and somebody grabbed an 8-track stereo cassette cartridge and said, "Alright, this is the cartridge he plays." Of course there is no place to insert it, so we'll have to do it off camera. We just went through it all and did it very fast, actually, with me rushing off camera and changing make-ups. We wrote it out, but it was partly ad lib and then the editing--the sense of contrast was punched up a little. The different moods and things.

THAT DIFFERENCE IN EMOTIONS WAS ONE OF THE THINGS I REALLY LIKED ABOUT THE SCENE.

Luckily, I didn't have to do it in a straight continuity like you saw there. We would shoot something and stop while I went off and changed my make-up and mumble and grumble and got myself around to a different frame of mind.

WHAT PROBLEMS DID YOU HAVE WITH USC OVER THE OWNERSHIP OF THE FILM?

'SC was very good about it. That was one of my major life lessons, you see. That lesson was that there was no honor among theives. What we did was we just took the film from 'SC. Our position at the time, at least our rationalization, was the fact that USC was so bad about the ownership of student films. What John and myself did again and again was see USC take the fruit of the student's works, which they paid

The above still is a rare shot of the original DARK STAR model built by Greg Jein to use in the film for the special effects. Photo courtesy of GREG JEIN.

for and made themselves, and copyright it under their (USC's) own names, take it out and do what they wanted with it. Make some money off of it, and the student would never share or have any participation in it. I saw them do a very bad thing to a friend of mine who worked very hard over a film, paid for it himself, and USC said, "We own this." In the case of some films like THE RESURRECTION OF BRONCO BILLY, they made a whopping profit.

So when the time came that we had a chance to expand the film, we said, "Well, what about USC?" We decided that they could go fuck themselves with a red hot crowbar. We went down and took the negative, went away, and did it ourselves. So essentially what we did is we stole it. At the time we were very pleased with ourselves. We got away with it and thought this was the way the big boys work, and we were right--it is the way the big boys work, but it is one of the things I regret today.

I've learned to take a great deal of pain from inevitable dealings with people. That's truth. It'll be released again. It was re-released in England this spring. I went over there to work on ALIEN and the first thing I see is DARK STAR in all these theatres. I said, "My God, how did this happen?" Bryanston has been bankrupt for two years and then they were planning on re-releasing and somehow--and so for several weeks it was out in London and we were so pleased. It got the most intelligent and nicest response. Much nicer than it did anywhere in the states. It was much better liked and much better received. It ran for longer. I have a whole stack of great reviews from London and British newspapers. It made worthwhile somehow because when it was released in '75 it got a wide release, and it got released in a lot of different places, but it didn't seem to me that anybody liked it or understood it, and it was a great disappointment. When you put what amounts to four years of your middle twenties into something like that--it's the major project of your life and you hope people will love it and they don't seem to--and this in a way made up for all that, 'cause I went over there and sat in audiences and talked to reporters and read the reviews and it seemed like they understood the picture when I read the review, and I was so pleased. They like me better in Europe than they do in America, which is really puzzling to me.

WELL, THE FILM STILL SHOWS HERE IN AMERICA AT CONVENTIONS AND IN ART THEATRES. DO YOU KNOW WHO IS DISTRIBUTING IT?

In England it is being distributed by Oppidan Enterprises, and I know it was liked here. The people who liked DARK STAR were always hippies, which was fine except that nobody else seemed to like it at all. When I went over to Paris in '75 I was very surprised to have a French filmmaker contact me about working on a French production. They had done it on the basis of DARK STAR. They'd seen it at Filmex. Then when I went to England, I was very surprised to see how well the English understood and enjoyed the film. I thought

ALIEN preproduction spacesuit design by MOEBIUS. © 1979 Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

about that a fair amount. Why it is that I'm an American and the only times I've ever been out of America was recently on those two occasions, and Americans don't like my work and Europeans do. I don't know what really to make of that except that maybe I have a really oddball viewpoint or...I'll tell you one thing though. I'm beginning to believe that Americans have very good hearts but very poor palates.

AFTER SEEING SOME OF THE CURRENT CROP OF FILMS, I THINK I CAN AGREE. I HEARD THAT AFTER DARK STAR, YOU AND JOHN CARPENTER WERE PLANNING TO WORK ON OTHER PROJECTS. WHAT BECAME OF YOUR ASSOCIATION?

I read an article in PSYCHOLOGY TODAY last week which talked about the kind of relationship that men--men in their twenties--have. A mental relationship where a man will become associated with another man who will be his mentor and his guide for awhile. I pretty much hero-worshiped Carpenter while we were working on that film, and he really was a mentor to me even though he was two years younger than I was because I admired him. And this article said that mentor relationships generally end up badly. They end up falling apart with a lot of recrimminations between the two people. I thought, gee, that just about reflects because we were so close for so long, and then it fell apart so suddenly and so totally. I felt so completely rejected 'cause John finally got fed up with working with me. John didn't like the fact that I was cutting into his glory, 'cause he doesn't like a two man show. He likes a one man show. I never knew that about him.

I was getting increasingly harder to work with because my frame of mind was deteriorating as all of ours were in the last year or so of work on it because it was so hard. It was beginning to be too much for him, personally to be around him, and also he was beginning to get infected with the "Treasure of the Sierra Madre" syndrome--that is "we are buddies when we search for the gold, but when we have the gold we all want it for ourselves." And he told me that finally it was becoming too impossible and that we would have to maybe permanently but certainly for a time suspend our professional working relationship. By the time that he finally got around to softening towards me, feeling better towards me, I had hardened my heart towards him and lost interest. I don't know, maybe this is too personal, but I wrote him a letter recently, he wrote me a letter, and I think we're trying to bridge those gaps between each other. But you have to be a big human being to last through some of the most difficult times around and stick together.

WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED ON THE DUNE FILM PROJECT?

Well, the answer is that the backers chickened out.

WHAT EXACTLY DID YOU DO ON THE FILM?

I was director of special effects.

This is an interpretation by RBCC staffer Martin Cannon of an early scene in the film ALIEN (based on preproduction material).

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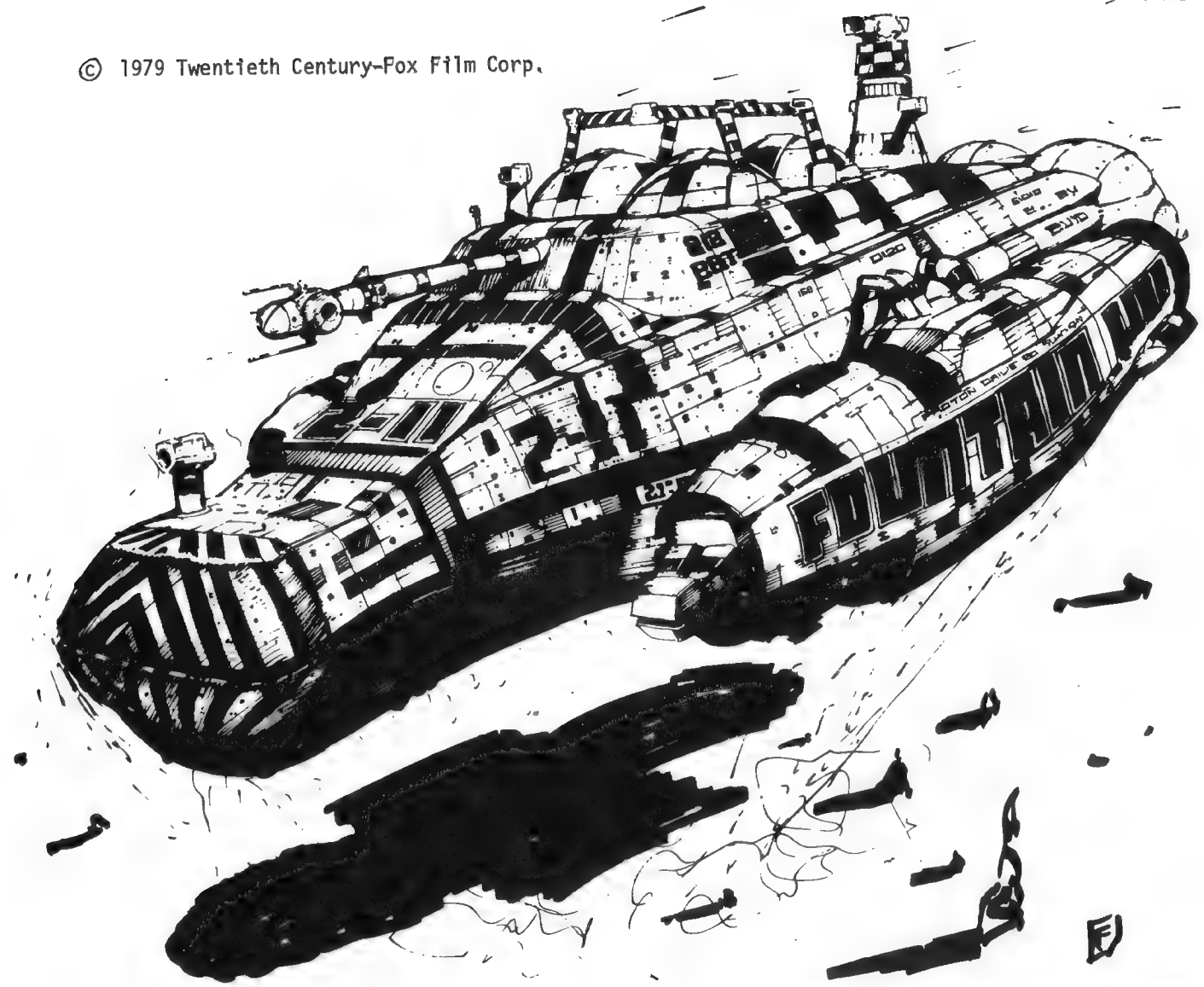

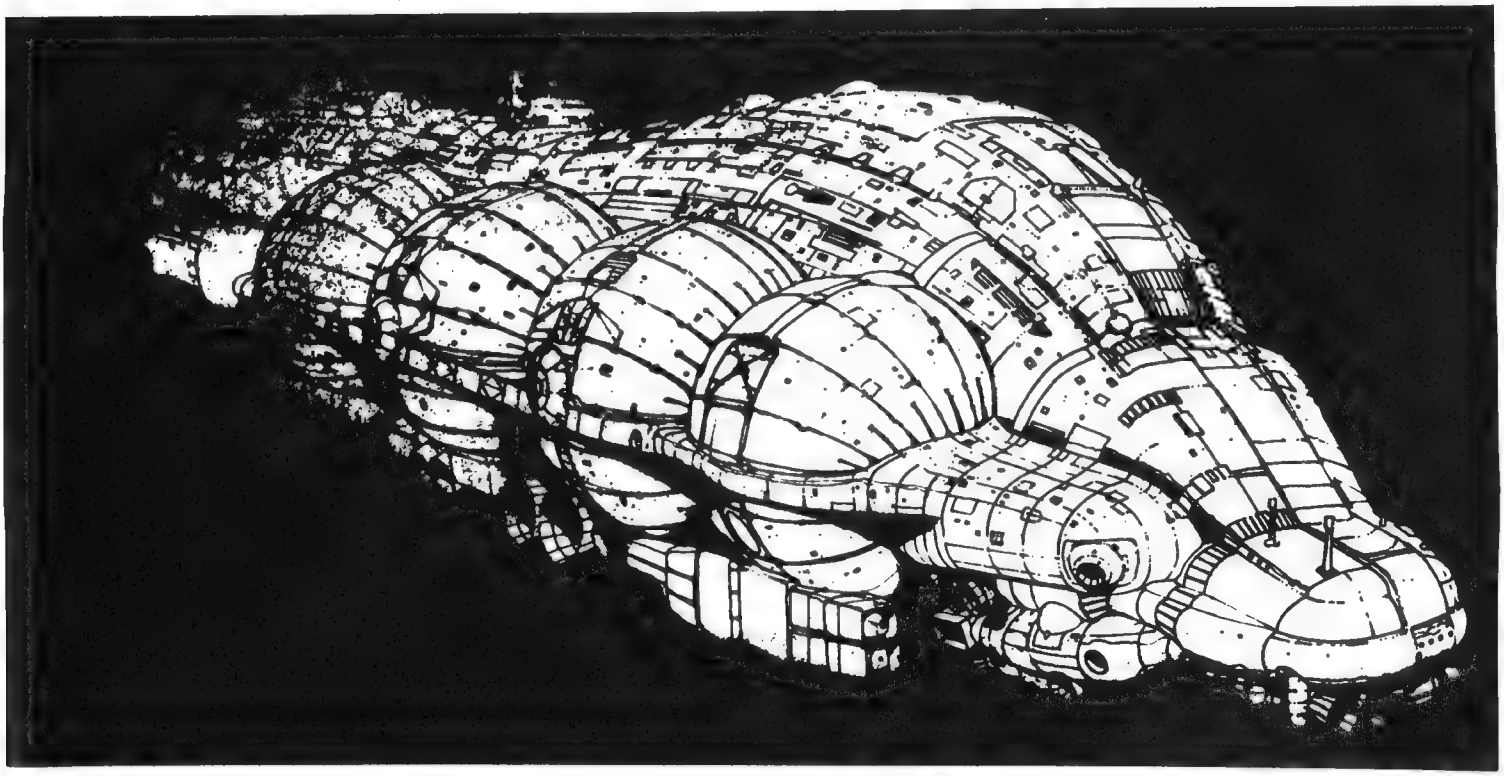

Unused preproduction spaceship designs for ALIEN by artist Chris Foss.

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OPPOSITE PAGE: Preproduction spacesuit designs for ALIEN by Moebius along with a still from the film of the final version used.

DID YOU DO ANY OF THE ART OR...

No, no. Not at all. Jodorowsky, who was the director, hired the finest, most fantastic artists in the world to design the picture. He'd included a French artist named Jean Giraud, who is known under the pseudonym of Moebius from HEAVY METAL. Another artist named Christopher Foss who's a rather popular British cover artist on science fiction magazines and is now working with Harryhausen on the new Sinbad movie, and a fellow named Hans Rudy Giger who just finished designing the monster for ALIEN. This is where I met all of these people, of course, and they were so good. When I saw the work that they were beginning to turn out, there was absolutely no point in me ever picking up a pencil. My job was just going to be getting onscreen what they designed. Just put it on film and make it move.

DID ANYTHING EVER END UP ON FILM OR DID IT COLLAPSE IN PRE-PRODUCTION?

It collapsed at the end of pre-production, after everything had been designed. It was a shame, too, those things were beautiful.

IS THERE ANY CHANCE OF RESURRECTING IT?

I don't think so. I think they will make a film of DUNE, but I don't think it will bear any resemblance to the one we planned.

MOEBIUS DID A STORY OF YOURS FOR HEAVY METAL. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?

When I was working on DUNE, I went over there and I was very scared. It seemed like a mighty responsibility. It was a foreign country, it was the most sophisticated city in the world, I'd never been there, I was working with people I felt were a little out of my league, and the production was an expensive one. The result of which is that I was so frightened that I might not be able to keep my job that I ended up doing my job much faster than anybody else, so I finished all of my pre-production work on the special effects weeks in advance of anybody else getting up to meeting their schedules. I was able to meet all my schedules, but I was so terrified. I worked so hard. I had a lot of expert help, too, but I drove them.

Well, that meant I had weeks of sitting around on my hands with nothing to do. I was getting nervous; I was getting on everybody else's nerves, and Moebius turned to me and said, "Why don't you write for me a comic strip that I can draw for my magazine?" I said, "Fine!" and I sat down and I spent two or three weeks drawing up a rough--a storyboard of this cartoon strip which I gave Moebius just before I came back to the states.

It was a year after DUNE had fallen through. I had been back here. I had been poor and got out of being poor again, and ALIEN was getting started when all of a sudden I noticed that NATIONAL LAMPOON was publishing an American version of Moebius' magazine. I saw on the promotional advertising that there was my story, and I had never seen it. I had never seen it drawn by Moebius. And when I finally got the issue, I was so amazed. It was so beautiful. It was better than I expected, even as good as I knew he was. It came about like that. He has been waiting for me to do a sequel to it, which is three-quarters done, and I just have been unable to get around to it.

Sigourney Weaver (RIPLEY), Yaphet Kotto (PARKER) and Harry Dean Stanton (BRETT) in a tense scene from Dan O'Bannon's latest film, ALIEN.

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DIDN'T YOU GET ANY ROYALTY CHECKS FROM IT?
Do you know what kind of money those things make?

NO.
About 15¢. Yeah, I could have gotten a royalty check. I think I could have gotten 20 francs from the French magazine and I think I could have gotten another $25 from the American publication. Somehow, it didn't even seem cost effective to sit down and write a bill.

WAS STAR WARS THE NEXT FILM YOU WORKED ON?
Yeah.

COULD YOU TELL US EXACTLY WHAT YOU DID FOR THAT?
First thing I did was turn down Dykstra's job. That was back in '75, when Gary Kurtz called me on the telephone and asked me if I wanted to work on special effects, and I had never met Kurtz. I didn't know him. STAR WARS. I didn't know anything about him or where he was coming from, but I certainly would have taken the job except that he told me one week after I had been offered to direct all of the special effects on DUNE. I told him about that commitment. I told him about the salary and everything else, and I asked him, "Could you meet or better that?" He said, "No, I can't." So I did DUNE and worked on it for six months, then it collapsed. Then a year after the first phone call, Kurtz called me again and said, "Well, STAR WARS is just about finished, but we still need some people to do special effects work, to do clean-up. Are you interested?" Since at that time I was absolutely flat broke, I was very interested. So I went to work on STAR WARS for a few months doing computer graphics. That was how I fucked myself on STAR WARS, is what that's called.

WAS THAT BLUEPRINT INTERIORS OF THE DEATH STAR SHOWN IN THAT BRIEF SEQUENCE YOUR WORK?
Just about anywhere in the film where they cut to a screen and there's some activity on it, some animation on it which looks computer generated, it was probably done by John Wash and Jay Teitzell under my supervision. Most of it was not done by real computers, it was simulated, but...

SOME OF IT WAS?
A little of it was. I got to work with a real computer and that was a lot of fun. I'm not scared to work with real computers now that I have had a chance to work with them a little bit. Now isn't it funny how fate works? I could have been involved into a very great extent on STAR WARS except that I turned it down for another project that never went through. It's kind of ironic. I did a lot of work for STAR WARS, I worked pretty hard for several months. We spent a lot of money on computer graphics, and boy when I saw the finished film, I had to admit that you could cut everything I did out of that film and it would have still been the same film. It was so full of beautiful things that the computer graphics that we did represented just .001 percent.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Preproduction painting at top by H.R. Giger of derelect alien spaceship. Bottom still from ALIEN shows final filmed version.

GOT LOST IN A FLURRY OF VISUALS.
Yeah, not their fault. It's good! The film is excellent, there are so many things in it that I must say that my contribution to STAR WARS was very minimal.

BUT NOW YOU'RE INVOLVED WITH TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX'S PLANNED BLOCKBUSTER SCIENCE FICTION EPIC FOR THIS YEAR--ALIEN. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?
When DUNE fell through, I ended up back in L.A. flat broke, without an apartment, without a car, with all my belongings in storage, and I didn't know what to do. I moved in on a friend's sofa. His name is Ronny Shusett and he also had a very bad string of breaks recently, and we decided to do something together. I was more desperate than he was because I had to get off of his sofa, so we wrote a script called Alien, and that script called Alien, from the moment I typed "The End", proceeded to take on a life of its own. Everybody in town wanted it. We just couldn't believe it. Everything had fallen through for us. Nothing had ever worked. It had always gone so badly we said, "Well, yeah, they're all yelling about it, and they all want it, but it ain't gonna' work out 'cause it never does. It's just a lot of baloney."

But it just kept going and going and we made a deal with Brandywine Productions, and we made a deal with Twentieth Century Fox, and they started pouring money into it, hiring people, and we kept saying, "Nah, it ain't gonna happen." Then we got checks--they paid us checks, and we looked at each other and said, "It's happening." Step by step we kept saying, "Nah, it will

Early preproduction sketches of the alien being by Dan O'Bannon. These were done prior to his sale of the script to Fox.

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fall through by the next step, they always do," but it never did. It just kept expanding and expanding and growing.

We sat down on a few occasions, Ronny and I, and we said, "Let's see why this went so well and everything else went so badly when this isn't even our favorite script." We said, "Well, we caught the science fiction boom just right...our script was on the market just a month after STAR WARS was released...yeah, that's true," and we looked for other reasons like that, but when it came right down to it, we could never explain why that script went so far so fast by comparison with so many other things we have done. It's a mystery. One of those things that happen in life.

SO IS THAT HOW A LOW BUDGET SCIENCE FICTION FILM BLOOMED INTO A MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR PRODUCTION?

Yes! By accident, by itself, by mysterious forces of God is how it happened.

WELL, DO YOU THINK THAT IT IS BECAUSE ALIEN IS LIKE A GOTHIC, WHICH IS SOMETHING THE FILM INDUSTRY UNDERSTANDS WHILE DARK STAR IS A SCIENCE FICTION COMEDY...

Oh well, you have to understand that after DARK STAR, when that film was completed, when I saw the film up there on the screen as compared to what I had intended to make and John, and then I saw the reactions of the industry and the public to that film, it burned certain lessons into my head like a branding iron. Just right into my brain. There are many lessons. One lesson was not to make an episodic film; have a tight plot. Another lesson was do not make a comedy because nobody laughed.

So when I sat down to write ALIEN, in fact ALIEN was very similar to DARK STAR in many ways, it's just, "Well I can't make them laugh, maybe I can make them scream." Obviously, it worked. Applying those lessons did produce something that appealed more directly to people. I mean there are reasons, right? There are all kinds of individual little reasons. Yeah, it's a fine script, that's another reason, right? But then the world is an injustice, and we've written other fine scripts that were better and more commercial and just didn't go anywhere. This was a good script. It caught the science fiction market, and it was a combination of science fiction and horror, and nobody else had it out at that time. It was...we figured out all the reasons. We figured those were the reasons. But then in that case why didn't scripts X, Y, and Z do just as well? We added on, and so it just happened. It was luck.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US OF THE PLOT?

A little bit. All this year people have been coming to me to do interviews about ALIEN and have been asking about the plot, and I've been holding back because 20th Century Fox kept jumping on me and jumping on me saying, "Don't tell the plot! Don't tell the plot!" for all kinds of reasons. "You do that and we will make it hard on you because we don't want to give it away in advance and if you do people will steal it and blah, blah, blah." So like a dutiful little boy, I kept my mouth shut, and right now Charlie Lippincott is running around telling everyone the plot right down to the last detail, and so I feel like a sucker.

It is about a group of astronauts who are returning from a mining operation in a far part of the galaxy. They intercept a radio transmission in an unknown language, and they land on a barren planet to investigate it. When they land they discover that the alien transmission is indeed transmitted by an alien. They make contact, and then the shit hits the fan. Even though Charlie's been telling the whole plot, I don't want to because I think they've been telling too much because a lot of the plot is based on surprises and scares. What it comes down to is a good, scary monster

Hans Rudy Giger at work on a preproduction painting for ALIEN. © 1979 Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

H.R. Giger's preproduction painting of the alien derelect from ALIEN.

© 1979 Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

movie, but a monster versus astronauts in the future, which is not all that an original idea--it was done a lot in the fifties--but I think the principal difference would be in the level of the quality of the production.

YOU ALSO ACQUIRED A FINE GROUP OF ACTORS INCLUDING TOM SKERRITT.

It was fun talking with those guys because the thing I've been working towards all these years is being a director, and I've had practice at all of the things that a director does except work with actors. I've done all the special effects. I've rolled the film through the camera. I've edited. I've lit sets. You know, everything. You might say my muscle is well exercized in all aspects of film except that of the directing of actors because I haven't been allowed to get near them for years because there was always somebody else directing. To counteract that, I've tried to spend all my time talking to actors and watching the director working with them, so this was a beautiful opportunity to have Tom Skerritt, Yaphet Kotto, Harry Dean Stanton, and John Hurt--a lot of excellent people in there. So I hung around as much as possible and talked as much as I could get away with and watched them being directed.

I'll never forget one incident--one thing I've always been concerned about is the general belief in town, I think that Hitchcock stated it enough, that actors are idiots. They are impossible to work with. Generally are the one thing that everyone wishes they could do without on a movie. I remember I was called in just before they were getting ready to shoot because the actors were busy reading through a scene, and they called me in because they had objections about the dialogue. I went in and they said, "Aw, I can't say this line" or "I can't say that line." I sat down with them with a script and all the different actors pointed out all the different lines they had trouble with and what they thought should be done about it, and I agreed with every last thing they said. I thought these people are not fools, they are right. It was a very good experience to be able to see those guys work.

ARE THEY DOING, WITHOUT TOO MANY CHANGES, YOUR ORIGINAL SCRIPT?

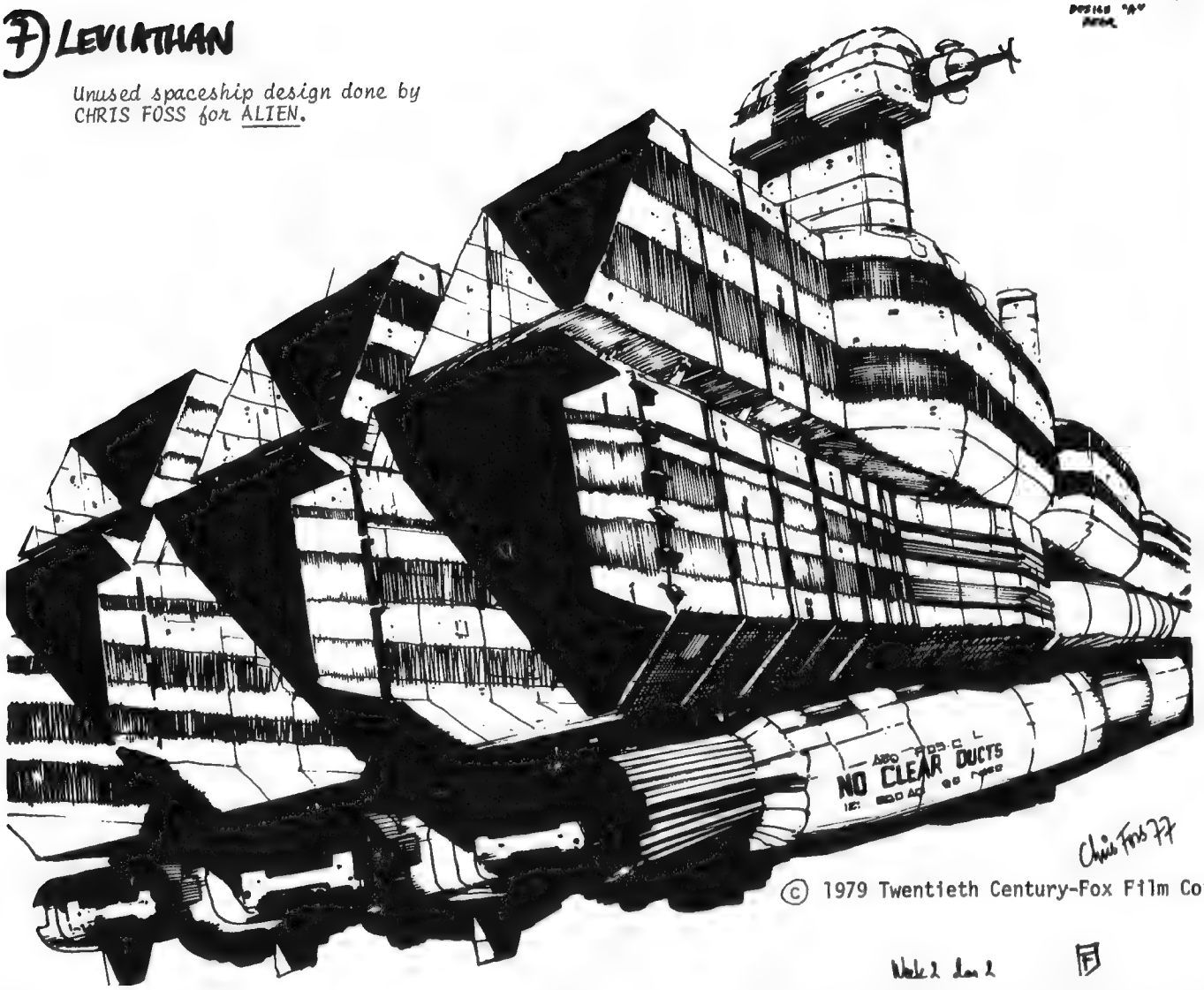
Well, David Geiler, who is one of the producers, sat down and just kept rewriting it all Spring, and just kept rewriting it, and rewriting it, and rewriting it, 'till there was very little resemblance to the original screenplay, and then I wasn't allowed to participate in that because he didn't want me to. He was producer. And then two weeks before we started shooting, he left for mysterious reasons. He left the production, whereupon the main producer, Gordon Carroll, and the director called me in and there were two weeks of frantic mutual work between all of us trying to put the script into a shape that they liked. By the time we got done, it was maybe 80% of what the original draft was. What we got on the screen was actually very close to the original draft.

WHAT CONNECTION DID YOU HAVE WITH THE SPECIAL EFFECTS ON THE FILM?

Well, none actually, because...the position I did

LEVIATHAN

Unused spaceship design done by CHRIS FOSS for ALIEN.



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is what was called "visual design consultant". I was allowed to be a jack-of-all-trades in the design area. Stuck my nose into everything. This was a shock to me, but I don't want to go into it because of the discussions with Fox right now. That's a problem there.

THERE WAS SOMETHING I HEARD ABOUT FOUR DIFFERENT CULTURES BEING INVOLVED AND FOUR DIFFERENT ARTISTS TO DESIGN ALL THAT.

Yeah. Originally, I sat down before they had a director, and they said, "Design the film," so I hired Ron Cobb immediately and I asked him to bring in Chris Foss from London, and to my surprise they did. They brought him over here. And I asked him to get H.R. Giger from Switzerland, and so they had Cobb and Foss over here and they designed a tremendous amount of the picture, but they (Fox) didn't want to hire Giger, which was the hardest fight. Originally, there were three cultures--the Earth culture and two alien cultures --and along the way one of the two alien cultures had been completely eliminated from the script. It was too much of a committee movie. Everybody was involved in the making of this. Every last executive in Fox, every last person had his two cents in, and along the way certain things were lost because everybody did get his two cents in. So we got these two cultures now, just two.

WHAT ABOUT MOEBIUS? I HAD HEARD THAT HE WAS INVOLVED?

Oh what a terrible misunderstanding. When I arrived in England, I was told, "We hired Moebius!" I said, "Wonderful!" They said, "He's coming over." I said, "Great!" He arrived. I was so glad to see him. We talked. He had started the design and he had started by designing the spacesuits, and he was ready to sit down and get to work. On the first day he arrived, it was discovered that there had been a misunderstanding about the salary. He had thought that they were paying him $5,000.00 a week, when in fact they were paying him $500.00 a week, and he couldn't afford to work on that basis at this time because of his expenses, so he gave them the spacesuit designs, got on the plane, and went back to France. They used him. They used the designs, but that was the end of his involvement and the money. On the other hand, Giger, whom they had fought me over for a year, they didn't want to use, they suddenly used him and he ended up as their star designer, and they completely forgot about the fact that I had to shove him down their throats. Now they believe that they found him.

WHAT ABOUT RON COBB'S CONTRIBUTION?

He did a lot. He designed practically all the hardware. They used him the way you would use a dirty old wrench. Whenever they couldn't figure out how to design something, they said, "Here Cobb, you design it." Since they could not figure out how to design most of the things in the movie, he ended up designing most of the things, but he was never regarded as being in charge of that.

YOU ARE NOW WORKING ON A NOVEL CALLED "THEY BITE", WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY A FILM TREATMENT, I BELIEVE.

Yeah, originally it was to be a movie, and maybe it will be anyway, but I started it in '75 (the script) and

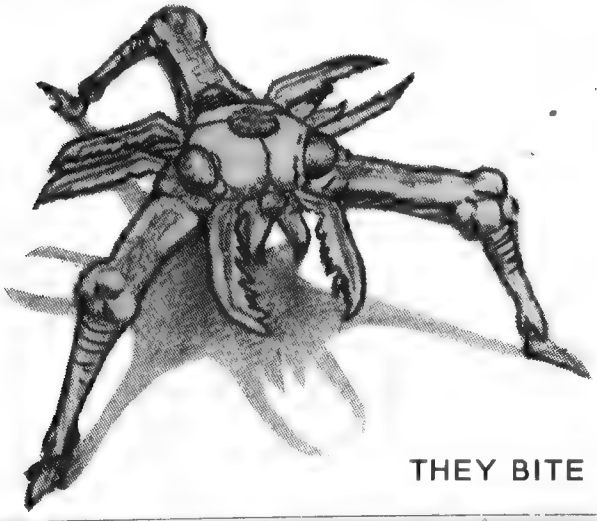
finished writing it just when I got the offer to work on DUNE. Well, by the time I've had the time to get back to working on THEY BITE, which wasn't until this year, my thoughts on it had changed. I decided that I wanted to write a novel. It seemed like a very, very good piece of material to write as a novel since it has one of the best plots I've ever invented. I thought, all right, I want to write a novel, I'll write a novel out of this. I got the story right here right in front of me. I sat down and began work on it. It is a very interesting task. It's a new challenge. It's quite different from writing a movie.

HAVE YOU CHANGED THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT OF BUGS COMING UP OUT OF THE GROUND AND TAKING OVER THE EARTH?

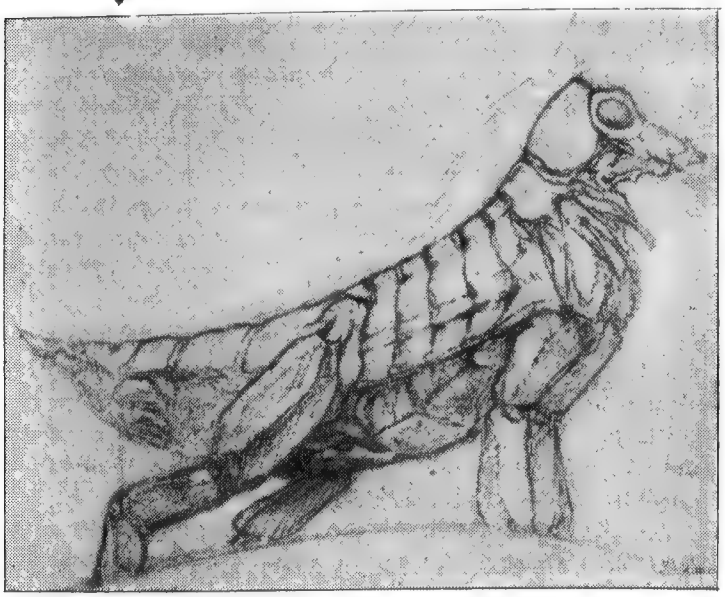
Hasn't changed in the least from its original concept. One of the reasons I decided to write this particular one is because the story is so strong.

A HORRIFYING SHOCKER?

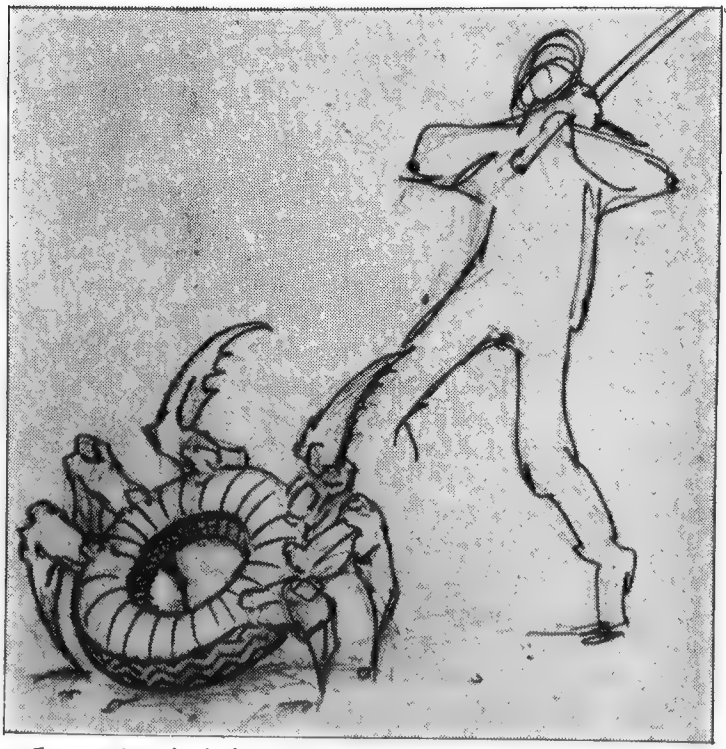
Yes. And it's the last "horrifying shocker" I'm gonna' do in a long time because I'm getting stale on them. I think one of the reasons if you find me in a depressed mood today is because I've been spending the last two or three years just thinking about horrible things, and ultimately it becomes part of your way of thought, and I started getting depressed. But I do



THEY BITE



From THEY BITE, a story in progress. Above, an insect metamorphsizes to mimic a collie. Drawings by DAN O'BANNON. Copyright 1979 by Dan O'Bannon.



Insect mimicking an automobile tire from THEY BITE. Sketch by Dan O'Bannon. Copyright 1979 by Dan O'Bannon.

have to finish it because if you set yourself a major task, you want to go through with it. I'd like to do something upbeat for a change.

DO YOU HAVE ANY PROSPECTIVE PUBLISHERS FOR THEY BITE?

No, because I'm gonna' play this one close to the chest. All the deals I've made in the past were made from the position of weakness and desperation. Take whatever you can get and as fast as you can get it because you can't afford when you're truly broke to wait for the best offer or deal, you need the money immediately. I'm not gonna' take They Bite like this. I'm not gonna' thrust it out there into the garbage disposal and watch them chew it and me up as has always happened in the past. I'm gonna' get this one to a good state of completion and then, through my agent, I'm gonna' offer it to different publishers and I want the best possible deal on this. If I go for an advance at this point, they won't know what is there, and I won't get a good deal. It won't be until after I've got one book out that I will be able to do that. No, I'm gonna' play this one carefully.

WELL, WITH NOVELS LIKE THE SHINING AND THE HAPHAESTUS PLAGUE BEING ON THE BESTSELLER LISTS, IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVE A PRETTY GOOD CHANCE.

Well, I know all of those books because I've read all of them, but I'm trying to go a little bit above by going into The Exorcist or The Andromeda Strain category.

WHICH IS?

Which is just a cut above. It's a little classier. It appeals to a slightly wider market, and, of course, the result is a little bit more money. I've been studying in the last year very intensively a lot of different books and authors to try to find the techniques for writing it well. And I did. I made a very careful study of The Exorcist, the writing technique of Jaws, The Andromeda Strain, and also I've been studying the way that Kurt Vonnegut and Howard Fast both write. Those guys, they don't write horror, they don't write science fiction, what they do do is they know how to

Tom Skerritt [DALLAS] comes upon the skeletal remains of the alien pilot of the derelect space ship he finds on a planetoid in ALIEN.

© 1979 Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

tell a story. They know how to put words on a page. So I'm putting a great deal of work into this to put it into the top of the line that you can get from a horror story.

ANY PROJECTS PLANNED BEYOND THAT?

You know, I have a lot of projects stacked up in this file cabinet, but when I've got this one finished, I don't know. Life sort of dictates what comes next. It's hard to plan too far down the road between this and the other thing.

WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF THE SCIENCE FICTION GENRE TODAY?

This is another golden age of science fiction. It fell on really stale times in the sixties, but there never has been that much.

DO YOU FEEL THERE IS A BIG BOOM AND THAT THERE IS ENOUGH QUALITY TO SUPPORT THAT BOOM?

Oh well, it's a...I think it's fine, actually. There are a lot of people that are cynical about the current science fiction wave, but the central thing that is worthwhile about it is that maybe for the first time in history the general public at large is getting to be interested in science fiction, and concurrently the general public is beginning to accept the idea of the exploration and colonization of outer space. I think that these are really fine things because they're necessary. Because until the public at large is interested in these things, they won't happen. I think it's fine. I grew up in the fifties, and then in the fifties there were a lot of good science fiction movies. They were kinda' cheesy, and there was a lot of good literature. For a kid who's growing up now with the amount of science fiction movies and books and general interest of it, it must be wonderful.

OKAY DAN, THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE INTERVIEW.

Yeah, come again.

* * *

CREDITS:

DARK STAR: *Writer with John Carpenter; production designer and editor; played Pinback*

STAR WARS: *Computer animation and graphic displays with Larry Cuba, John Wash, Jay Teitzell, and Image West.*

ALIEN: *Writer with Ron Shusett; design consultant.*

* * *

Ron Cobb

Ron Cobb's artwork has been apparent in numerous places for many years. For a period of time he supported himself by doing paintings for Forrest J. Ackerman's FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND magazine with contributing cartoons to such diverse publications as The L.A. Free Press, The L.A. Vanguard, Mother Earth News, Loose Licks & The Digger. While he is quite good as a science fiction illustrator, this aspect of his artistic nature has not been as apparent, restricted to a few cartoons, a cover for F&SF, and the cover of Alfred Byron Cover's first novel, The Autumn Angels. He's also done some fantastic art for various privately commissioned paintings and for various films.

When I arrived at Ron's apartment for the interview, he had been working on a painting for the forthcoming Conan film. He modestly claimed that he had been working to improve his anatomical detail. The paint-

RON COBB interview

ings were quite detailed, anatomically and otherwise. In them he had captured somewhat the flavor or Frazetta and Boris, yet in a style all his own and greater background detail was in evidence throughout. Done in vibrant colors, I can only hope the visuals of the final film match the beauty of these pre-production paintings. He also had out the designs for a robot that he was designing for a major toy company, and it showed the careful attention to structural specifics and fascination with machinery evidenced in other examples of Ron's work. The toy was imaginatively designed and made one look forward to the day when the dull material out on the market now would be replaced by items of greater imagination and quality.

After accepting a glass of 7-up to drink, we settled down and chatted over particulars before starting the interview. Ron is a very friendly, open and frank person. He was quite helpful and seemed very pleased with the interest I expressed in his work. Finally getting down to matters, I started the tape recorder and we began.

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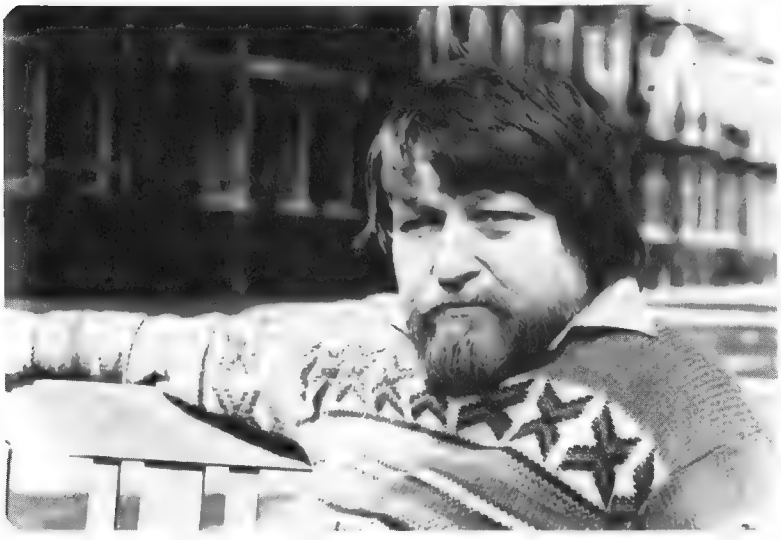


Portrait photo by ROBIN LOVE

HOW DID YOU GET YOUR START IN CARTOONING?

Hmmm. I grew up always drawing. It was always very important to me, but cartooning, that particular form of drawing, had never interested me much. It was really strange. I think that the E.C. Comics were fascinating to me, but I was intrigued more by the kind of mastery of illustration they represented. I was more interested in becoming a painter and an illustrator. That was the influence they had on me. But when it came down to stylized cartooning, that just happened in 1965 when I ended up meeting some people from the L.A. Free Press and realizing that they had this little paper that they were starting and that they were interested in single panel political-type cartooning, and it never occurred to me to even try something like that. I suddenly became very interested in that, and I started exploring the form, donating cartoons, and it grew and grew over the '60s, so really the cartoons represent my introduction into cartooning and my learning process for five years. Fascinating period.

HOW DID YOU GO ABOUT SELLING YOUR FIRST PIECES OF ARTWORK?

Again, as I say, I was always drawing, always producing artwork, and I just wore people down in the sense that the accumulating material eventually provoked people into asking if they could buy it, and that was privately. And I would do a drawing and sell it privately or collect it privately, and then it wasn't long before I began to think in terms of submitting artwork to various magazines with Forry Ackerman's encouragement (he wanted to act as my agent) and I just eased into it that way. I started painting something, I would send it off to the MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION, I sold them one cover, and I grew up getting used to that idea. I just happened, and its been growing ever since I was a teenager.

WHAT WERE YOUR INFLUENCES WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG, PERHAPS SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ARTISTS?

Well, the thing that really excited me most was my infatuation with E.C. Comics because they--I was living in Burbank at the time and E.C. Comics represented a very shocking, sophisticated, pictorial fantasy version of the world. Everything about it excited me. I began to bend my interest in drawing in that direction. They represented a part of the world that was very interesting to me. People that were part of a world that was not as boring as the people I was growing up with. So Jack Davis, I remember I was quite taken with Jack Davis and his ability.

Later I became quite intrigued by George Gross, the German cartoonist who cartooned during the depression between the two wars. I was fascinated by the harshness and the directness, and the fact that he would take on subjects that were very large, like he criticized an entire society ot an entire culture from top to bottom rather than just pointing fingers at politicians, and he would create images that were emotionally very, very powerful. That rang a bell.

And of course, Goyah's disasters of the war always intrigued me too. I think that at an early age I became intrigued by the impact of a drawing where something is denied or we don't want to think about it, but is nonetheless real. The mere drawing of this, like bodies being dismembered on a battlefield, the impact is so great yet it's undeniable, it's even double because you can't shut it off, you know it's true, you just don't want to hear about it. I've always felt that in so many things the world would be so much different if we faced up to these things, if we would not let them go on in the shadows.

I think that a lot of that went into the cartoons. I was very, very interested in that kind of revelation, in attacking the sensitivies, in being tasteless and excessive perhaps, but always tied to some element that I knew was real. George Gross, Jack Davis, Goyah.

ANY OTHER E.C. ILLUSTRATORS THAT YOU REMEMBER WITH FONDNESS?

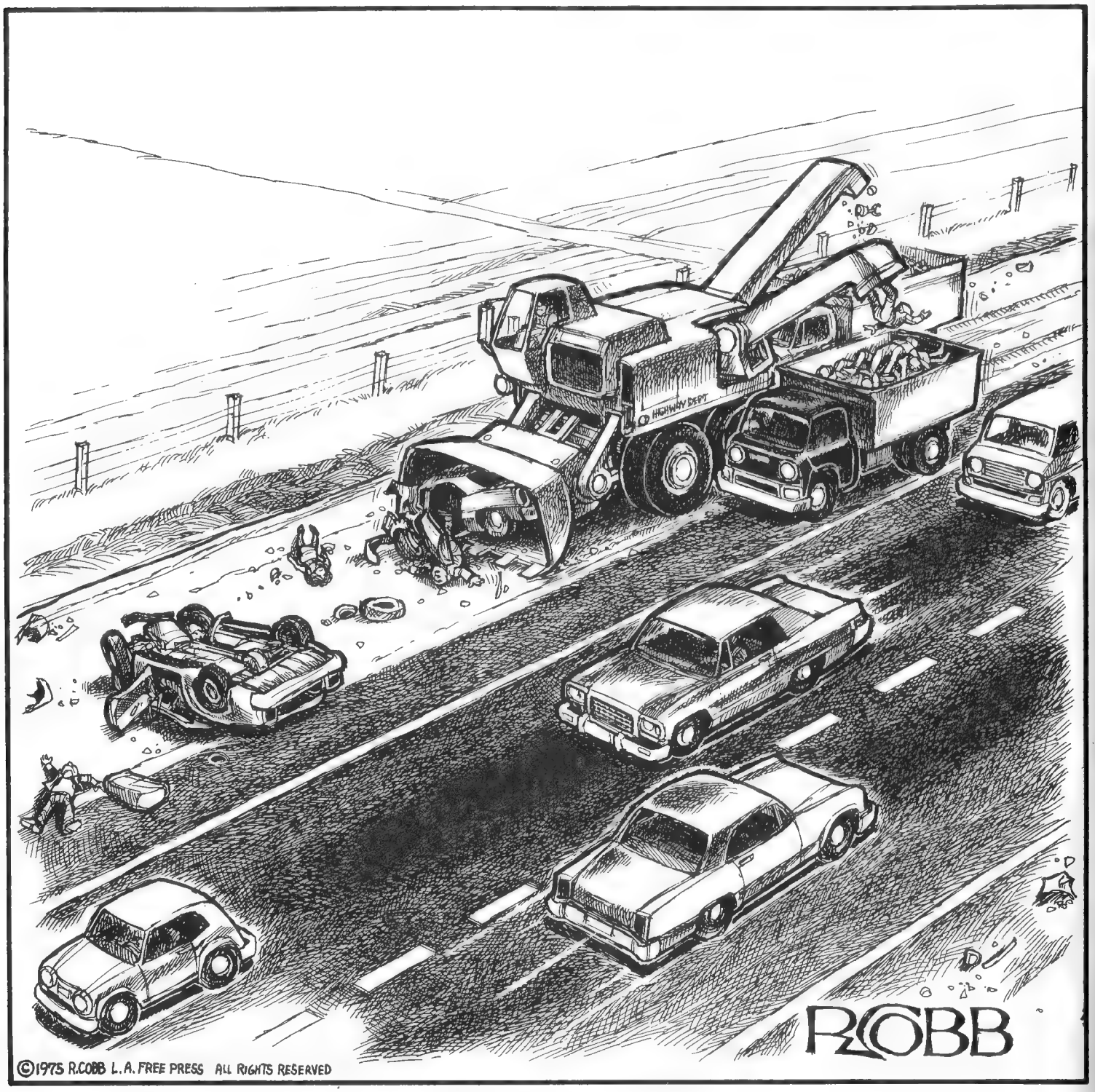
Not as much. Wallace Wood and all. Wood was always a little too slick. There was a real gutsy, loose quality to Davis, although not so much later, but in his TWO-FISTED TALES days and a few things he did for the horror comics--VAULT OF HORROR and all those--a few, not many, but I always liked him. I always liked the way he looked like he could pull a panel with a scene from the world that was obviously extracted wholely from his mind. This amazing facility to draw. I just got into it. This is where I got the idea of making hands very expressive, I sort of copied that quality, I always liked Jack Davis' hands.

Then of course, on the other side of it all, the realm of painting. The one tremendous influence on me, which just riveted me, was Chesley Bonestell.

Chesley Bonestell was the other direction--my whole painting direction. If I was ever going to do anything with painting, that's what I wanted to do--astronomical art--and so the science fiction outlet was always conducive to that kind of work, but I even became interested in just textbook illustrations. I began to get more interested in what you could do with art in science, not just science fiction, also artist's re-creations of extinct animals, the use of planets you've never been to, but to sort of reconstruct them with that photographic realism. It seemed like an interesting thing to do with representational art. Undeniably creative because you're not copying anything, and it sort of justifies representational art. It always excited me. That would be about it. Everything else would fall away.

HOW DID YOU FIRST END UP MEETING THE PEOPLE FROM THE Free Press?

Every once in awhile, in '64, '65, I would do a kind of a little cartoon just to get an idea off my chest. That was exploring the idea of doing cartooning and submitting them to Playboy, which was the only outlet available at that time, and I happened to have a kind of political cartoon that I had put together for who knows what, I think I had submitted it to Playboy once and it was rejected, and I actually just happened to have it on me when I went into the offices of the Free Press with a friend of mine one day who was retrieving a letter, and someone at the paper asked to see it, and I said, "Oh," and I showed it to him--it was sort of a little Charles Addams' cartoon, it wasn't particularly political in this particular case--and they



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said, "We'll print that," and I said, "Terrific." So I gave him the thing, and I said, "Well, it's not very political, but could I do something for you next week?" They said, "Sure, we'll print it." So I went home and drew "Man Demonstrating His Superiority Over Animals", that was the first cartoon I ever drew for them, a man with a skeletal head blowing his head off while a frog watches, and that's how it all started. Week by week from then on. But I just happened to be in there one day and they asked to see something that was under my arm.

DO YOU HAVE A GENRE THAT YOU LIKE TO DRAW BEST?

I like the role of imagination in drawing. I like all applications of what can be done in any field. Fantasy--that to me represents an inner reality. I like science fictional illustration, it certainly represents an outer reality, but it's all imaginative. It all requires the intervention of the human mind, and there's no real boundary. I suppose in a sense I become most intrigued by scientific or science fictional illustration. That's more of a challenge to me personally, but I do like and will also dabble in all those other things.

YOUR POLITICAL CARTOONS EMBODY STRONG EMOTIONS. WOULD YOU CARE TO COMMENT ON THAT?

I was born out here. I grew up in a middle class family, sort of trapped in Burbank, and I think I grew up with a deep frustration concerning strong feelings. Everyone seemed to keep their feelings so hidden; they denied them so much. I felt things strongly that I guess I'll spend the rest of my life blasting them out, perhaps overdoing it, but it just seemed like a whole dimension of feelings that were important to surface, certainly with me, and I kind of felt in the society at large. I thought we should handle them, we should talk about them, and we should discuss things that create them. Obviously it was all therapy for me because I felt that restriction as well, and I felt I needed to learn to express things that disturbed me, and I wanted to take as many people as possible along with me who felt just as trapped.

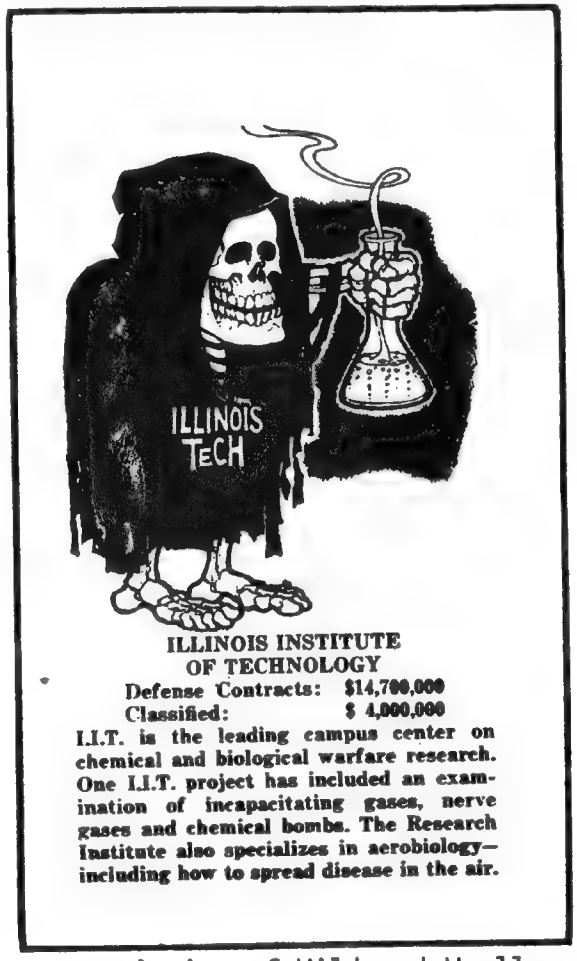
YOUR DRAWING EVIDENCES TO ME A GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF STRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING. HOW DID YOU GO ABOUT ACQUIRING THIS TALENT?

I think just a childish fascination with science. Most of my friends in high school and so forth were heading in that direction. I know that in the fifties again, it was a very anti-intellectual sort of time. The most potent position to take was a sort of egghead, rationalist position against a sort of collective emotionalism, not a very real emotionalism but a collective emotionalism that amounted to a kind of paranoia about change and a tremendous reliance on fundamental Christian values and patriotic values and such, and a great paranoia about changes in the form of communism, and the only thing that had the great potential to counter all this was a rational point of view and seeing the world in terms of science. I've broadened considerably since then, but at the time it was a kind of tactful position I could take with my friends, and also deep within I found an almost religious awe in what science could reveal.

The implications of physics and astronomy were amazing to me and broadened my horizons to infinity, so I've just grown up with this tremendous comfort with science. I read a lot of sciences, I know a lot of people in the sciences, but I've never specifically studied any of them. I just picked them all up; and it still is the one kind of construct, the one kind of way in which I make a model of the world in my head, and in terms of understanding things I use science most of all, even in political commentary. I don't see it as an absolute or a final model, but I do see it as the most radical model, and it's the basis of a lot of understanding. If you're very loose about it, it could be projected into any field--to arts, to politics, to anything--and it's a great point of view. I've always utilized it, and I think that's a lot of it.

DID YOU EVER ATTEND ANY ART OR TECHNICAL SCHOOLS AT ANY TIME?

No, I've never been too good at that. I'm sort of self-taught. I've always been very impatient with actually studying anything. I have to be excited about it to pick up anything. That's why most of my familiarity with science comes from conversation. Lots of talk, not too much reading. I don't read too much. And drawing the same way. I could only draw what excited me, so hopefully I was excited by many, varied things so I could learn to draw them all, but I would only learn to draw them if I really had to. But to sit down dry and disciplined and study figure drawing or something like that without anything in mind is almost impossible for me. So I've never really been able to do it. I have a very short attention span, so I virtually have no formal education to speak of. I kind of slipped through it all. High school was all, and then I spent all of my time after than learning, teaching myself as I go along.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HOW DID YOU END UP WORKING ON ROGER CORMAN'S NIGHT OF THE BLOOD BEAST?

I made a submission with a friend of mine for a very elaborate latex monster because for awhile after high school I worked at Disney Studios, for two years. I lived in Burbank and it was the obvious thing to do. I needed a good job and it was easy to get in. I worked on SLEEPING BEAUTY, and after SLEEPING BEAUTY was finished, in '55 I think it was, I met a fellow there--actually I had known him in high school before that--who was an amazing craftsman, and eventually we ended up working for Ellis Berman, an artisan from Universal Studios at that time.

OUR LADY OF PRIVLEGE MERCY HOSPITAL
I'M SORRY MISS DENNING, BUT YOU HAVE CLEARLY FAILED TO CONVINCE THIS BOARD THAT THE PROPER CONTINUANCE OF YOUR PREGNANCY WOULD IN ANY WAY IMPAIR YOUR PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH... IN FACT, IT IS OUR FERVENT HOPE THAT THE MINOR HARDSHIP OF A FOURTH ILLEGITIMATE CHILD WILL GIVE YOU CAUSE TO BEHAVE IN A MORE RESPONSIBLE MANNER IN THE FUTURE....
THERAPEUTIC ABORTION COMMITTEE
SHHHH! MOMMY'S SLEEPING
R.COBB
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SIR...
"CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW RESPECTING AN ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGION, OR PROHIBITING THE FREE EXERCISE THEREOF;"
HEY MISTER!
"OR ABRIDGING FREEDOM OF SPEECH, OR OF THE PRESS;"
HEY!
"OR THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE PEACEABLY TO ASSEMBLE,"
"AND TO PETITION THE GOVERNMENT FOR A RE...
STRIKE
BAM!
"JUST WHAT IN THE HELL! DO YOU EXPECT TO ACCOMPLISH WITH ALL THIS SENSELESS VIOLENCE ?!!"
R.COBB
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We had a little shop in Burbank and we made movie props out of fibreglass and rubber, so we learned a lot of the techniques, and then he finally went bankrupt. This friend of mine, Ken Forsy, and I set up in his garage, and we were going to make movie props ourselves. I was going to design them and he was going to make them, so one of the submissions I'd made was to Gene Corman, Roger's brother--they were both making films--but he was making NIGHT OF THE BLOOD BEAST, and he was shopping around for a monster. I actually knew the guy who wrote the screenplay, Martin Marno, and we wanted to use it as an excuse for the debut of these really spectacular creatures. We were going to do something a la '75 or '78, something really elaborate. We had all this worked out, and, of course, they weren't willing to pay anywhere near as much as it was worth, so we were going to do it for cost just to show it could be done. So I designed this incredible creature. A man with a boy riding on his back, upper and lower arms, and you could see blood veins, and we made out an elaborate rendering, and we were going to do it for $400, and it was too much. They weren't willing to pay that much for it! So we weren't able to do it.

But we made a few hand props and demonstration models, and we struggled along for a long time trying to get this thing off the ground, but we were just too early. We wanted to make a complete 3PO-type robot in '58! A complete thing. It was form fitting and all plates of fibreglass and made it look like chrome and everything, and we finally had to give it up even though we did work on a few pilots where I designed some miniature sets for some things you've never heard of, things that never got off the ground, but pilots were made. That was my earliest involvement in film, but then after that I went into the army and I got out of the army in '64. It was part way into that year I started cartooning, and I've been cartooning until about two years ago, and now I'm back in film so to speak. There was a big period when I wasn't into film at all.

WHAT DID YOU DO ON SLEEPING BEAUTY?

In-betweens. That was all you could do. Every other drawing in a sequence, and it's very boring, almost like drafting. It's not terribly creative. It takes about thirty years or so before you get into a more creative position. I was straight out of high school. There was no way I could get into a creative position. What I wanted to do was learn animation. I thought I wanted to get into it, and I decided that after two years at Disney that animation is too tedious, and if I got into film, it would be live action because it was just quicker. I couldn't stand taking any longer; you lose the thrust of it. I still pretty much feel that way, although recent developments in cybernetics and technology and electronics might make animation as spontaneous as live action, and I think at that point I would be interested. As it stands now, it is far too tedious.

HOW DID YOU GET CALLED IN ON DARK STAR?

Toward the end of the period when I was doing the cartoons for the Free Press, I met Dan O'Bannon, and he was kind of a fan of my cartoons. He'd just seen them and just wanted to meet me. We had a really nice talk, and I really liked him because he had this amazing imagination, and he said something about how he wanted to make a film someday. Well, years later, he calls me again and says, "Well, now I'm a cinema student at USC and I'm making a student film and it's science fiction like we discussed, and we thought maybe you would like to see it and maybe might have some suggestions." I said, "I'd love to!"

So I went over, and, of course, it was DARK STAR in its formative stages, and he said, "Well, we just reached the point where we have to design the exterior of the spaceship. Do you have any thoughts on it?" I said, "Sure I would!" So I started scribbling out things on napkins at a House of Pancakes somewhere, and I made a little thing and I made that little re-entry body shuttle nose thing that was in the film, and Dan said, "That's it! Could you draw plans for that?" and I said, "Sure, I'd love to." I started drawing again, so I went home that night and drew up a plan for it, gave it to Dan the next morning, and he had a beautiful model built, and months later there it was on film.

It was just a great experience, and I was really impressed by the footage Dan had completed at that point in DARK STAR. So spectacular for a student film that I just couldn't believe it, but then much later of course the whole thing got theatrically released, and on and on and made Dan's career. It sort of launched Dan and John Carpenter, who co-created the film. So in a way my re-introduction is all due to Dan. I owe it all to Dan because he essentially started getting offers now because of DARK STAR to work on DUNE in Paris, which eventually fell through, and then STAR WARS, and each time he gave them a big sales talk like he was my agent, that they should use me. Either they never heard of me or thought I was just a cartoonist, and there were some like this, but eventually I started getting work.

So I did some work on STAR WARS with Dan, and so when Dan Finally sold his script, ALIEN, to Fox, I was taken on a sort of trial basis and ended up working throughout the entire film. So it just all followed from that donation to DARK STAR, so it was really a lucky kind of thing, and hopefully I would have been able to produce the work and continue the interest, but I've never been very good at pushing myself and going out and raking together these positions. Office to office with a portfolio under my arm, I just fine it very difficult to do, so perhaps I could have been doing this a lot sooner, but it certainly has happened in a way that I really enjoy. All the offers I get are based entirely on what I can do and what I would like to do and result in work that gives me a maximum of freedom because I'm just simply getting stripped from saying, "How do you visualize it?" I start working that way, and as I said earlier I really have no discipline. I can't really work unless I'm excited about what I'm doing. It's been terrific. It's been an amazing year and a half from STAR WARS to ALIEN to now.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN STAR WARS?

Well, STAR WARS again, as I say, Dan. Dan was working on STAR WARS and he mentioned to Lucas when they reached the point where they wanted to shoot inserts for the cantina scene--they wanted to add some more elaborate aliens--Dan suggested me to Lucas, and Lucas was familiar with my cartoons but had no idea I had this other background, a sort of science fiction background, so he said, "Fine! Bring him in." And I went in and we discussed it and he made a few suggestions, and I did, and all of my work eventually was delayed, but I did a week and a half's work of renderings of these different aliens complete with their religions and their backgrounds, the whole dope sheet on them, and a few little diagrams about how maybe they could be built and stuff, all in full color, and I took them in and Lucas was ecstatic. He loved them. It was really great. So they rushed them right out and Rick Baker and all the other people who were working there at the time turned them into rubber and there they were. So they were in STAR WARS, and I also did some of the imagery for the computer screens because that was Dan's specific job on STAR WARS at the time, and that was the last of us that were ever paid the normal amount, and I really didn't see any of this until STAR WARS came out. I paid like everyone else, went down and saw it, and there it was. But still, there was no particular work in that format except that Dan once again asked me to

do some preliminary paintings for ALIEN to help it sell, and when he did sell it, he talked Brandywine Productions and Fox into using me, and so I worked about seven months here on preliminary designs and then I went to London to Shepperton and did a lot of the final designs in the film, which is just terrific.

Preproduction illo by Ron Cobb drawn to help visualize the concept ALIEN before it was ever sold.

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HOW MANY OF YOUR ALIENS ACTUALLY APPEARED IN STAR WARS AND WHAT DID THEY LOOK LIKE?

I think there's three or four. I did six, and there were about three or four. There might have been a few that changed, but the most elaborate one was the sort of hammerhead thing with the eye on either side...

YOU MEAN THE PLANT CREATURE THAT BLINKED?

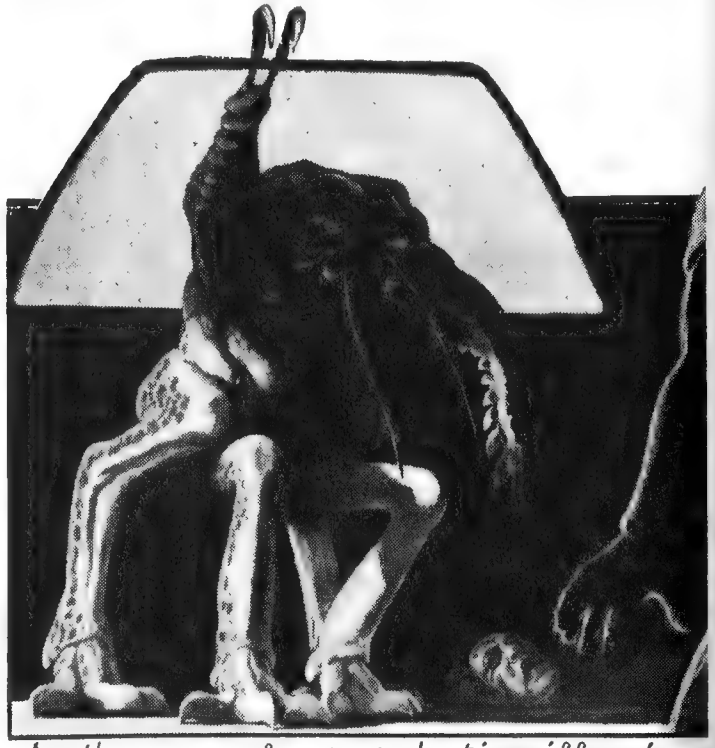
Yeah, sort of like a cobra neck and things. That was the first one I drew and they made almost an exact copy of it in the film; very nice in the film. I was very impressed. I think the first creature you see when they come in, the one with the sort of goat horns that stick up on this horny head, and then this couple of blue aliens with red eyes; they almost look like one of my cartoons. They are very similar to the cartoons. And then I did a big fuzzy thing with multiple eyes, and I did a plant and I did a kind of walrus-like creature, and I think bits and pieces of some of those ideas are incorporated in some of them but not exactly my copy. The first three I mentioned, though, were exactly what I had drawn.

THERE'S ALSO THIS PAINTING ON THE WALL...

That's another story. I didn't even know about that until...that was a more indirect contribution to the film. I was commissioned to do a painting for John Milius, a screenplay writer who eventually directed and wrote THE WIND AND THE LION and he invented Dirty Harry in his screenplay writing days, and JEREMIAH JOHNSON and JUDGE ROY BEAN and such. His latest film is BIG WEDNESDAY and now he is working on 1941 as a producer with Spielberg and about to start working on a film I'll be working on myself, JEDEDIAH SMITH. But long ago he asked me to do a painting for him, anything I wanted to do, so I concocted this strange landscape with this funny little man of a nondescript culture but definitely humanoid riding on the back of this big lizard in the hot sunlight.

Later when I was doing the aliens for Lucas with Dan over at Industrial Light and Magic in the Valley, I saw a still from Tunisia of this guy riding on the back of a lizard. It was just a publicity still and it's exactly like my painting, and I said, "Gee, what a coincidence. I did a painting like this." I had no idea that there was a connection. It wasn't until after the film came out and I had done my aliens, been paid, and left--Lucas was far too busy to ever talk about these things--and it wasn't until much later that John Milius called me and said, "Oh, by the way, did you know that your painting was in STAR WARS?" And I said, "I thought that looked awfully familiar." He said, "Yes, George was up here during the time just before he left for Tunisia and he saw the painting and he did a version of it in the film," so it was an indirect contribution.

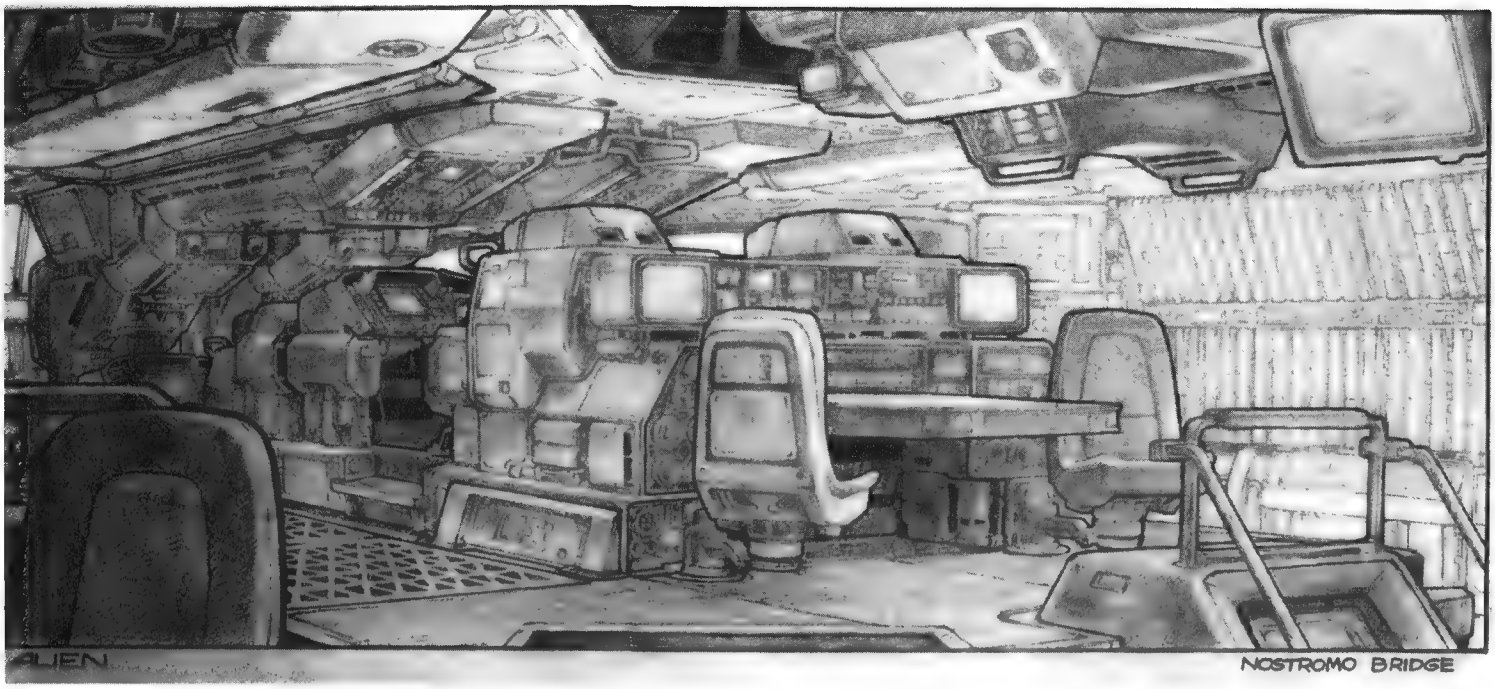
Lucas was stealing from anything and everything. Anything he could find from DUNE, you know, he had everything in that film. It was quite a compliment



Another pre-sale proproduction illo of the creature itself from the original first draft script of ALIEN.

© 1979 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp.

Final filmed version will undoubtedly look much different since H.R. Giger did the actual designing of the monster for the film, using original concepts.



Ron Cobb's design for the bridge of the Nostromo, the factory starship, in ALIEN.
© 1979 Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

actually. I was delighted to know that I was indirectly responsible for something else in STAR WARS because STAR WARS really surprised me when it came out. I had no idea that it would be that elaborate. It got successful and you have to remember that to the people working on it, it was just kind of a big comic book, you know. No one seemed to think that it would be as successful as it is.

OKAY, AND THEN YOU WENT INTO ALIEN.

That was a long process. I'm bad at dates and time durations. Sometime after DUNE collapsed in Paris and Dan came back, downhearted and starving for awhile, he eventually put together a screenplay with Ron Shusett of ALIEN, and they were making the rounds and while they were finishing up, they came to me and asked me to do a series of paintings to help sell it, so I knocked off a bunch of rather small paintings. Dan found some money somewhere and paid for my time and such, and again I was always grateful to help Dan out because he had always been involved with projects I could get excited about. So it was mainly the fact that I liked Dan and I liked Ron and I liked the project, but they came up with much luck.

So I did these series of paintings based strictly on Dan's first script, and they went through a variety of adventures, and they ended up selling it to Brandywine and Gordon Carroll and eventually 20th Century Fox. And when they decided to...when Brandywine decided to go on a search for a director, and eventually they set their sights on a production day some day, Dan convinced them they should use me to do preliminary designs along with Chris Foss from England and hopefully a few other people Dan had in mind who didn't go on the project until later.

So what happened was initially Chris Foss and I worked here at Fox for about seven months at a little office they found for us just cranking out nondescript designs--interiors, exteriors, spaceships, et cetera. Carrying some of my early painting ideas into more elaborate versions and also inputs from the director and inputs from the producer and inputs from trial directors along the way; Walter Hill and things. But still they were elaborate, but they weren't too practical. But it was fine because I was being paid just to sit there and design and design, and finally they settled on Ridley Scott and things began to get underway, and they realized that yes, indeed, they were going to go to London. There was talk about it, but we were never sure. Ridlet Scott decided he liked the preliminary stuff I'd done. Chris Foss had to go back to London before us, but he was eventually taken on the film again for awhile, but they were going. Ridley Scott liked my work and wanted me to come to London 'cause there was a chance that I was going to be kicked off at that point because the producer, who was really calling the shots, wasn't really sure about my work. He couldn't always relate to it. He wasn't sure I had the right approach. I never got the impression that they were impressed. Dan always liked what I was doing and he was always puzzled about it.

But it was Ridley Scott who saved the day and got me to London, and naturally they had to start all over again, design the film over again, only this time with an English production designer and a couple of art directors and a lot of other people to work with, so I was kind of on the periphery again, kind of having to prove myself.

As the additional six months passed in London, they gave me more and more to design, and I ended up making more and more of a contribution to the film, and so I was really quite satisfied that I had had an opportunity to do a lot of very, very basic designing on the film. I was looking for experience. It was a good team, a lot of people, and the other designer that Dan wanted to get on the film was Giger from Switzerland who tried to get brought out here, but he wasn't able to. Of course, in London they got him. Giger ended up being very intellectual in designing the alien culture, the monster itself, and things, and eventually built the monster. He asked that they build it as he designed it, so he insisted on doing it himself, and from what I understand it is rather spectacular.

I, along with the production designer, the art director and assorted draftsmen, did the Earth technology. I was able to hold sway quite a bit, designed quite a bit of it myself, including almost total design on a number of the major sets. It was a great experience. And when all the designing was done, at the time the basic designing of the sets was completed, they were well into about a third of the shooting, so I saw about a third of the shooting. Then I took off and took a little vacation around France, around Europe for awhile, and came back. Now the film is completely shot except for certain miniatures, and everyone seems very pleased with it. I am anxious to see it all put together.

WHAT BECAME OF THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT OF HAVING DIFFERENT ARTISTS DESIGN EACH CULTURE?

Dan basically wanted...his original idea was that I would design all of the Earth technology, Chris Foss would design all of the alien technology, and Giger would design the monster. That's what he wanted. As it turned out, I had a lot of influence in the design of the Earth technology, but I wasn't the sole designer. There were a lot of other people working on it. So it is a patchwork of many, many contributions, and they don't always fit, plus the fact that Ridley Scott had very, very strong ideas about all of it, which was sometimes good and sometimes I think confusing, so there's not everything fitting together as well as it could if it had been designed almost solely by one person, but as it turned out, Giger designed, as well as the monster, most of the alien technology, so it all kind of fits together. If there's one design concept which will dominate the film, it will be Giger's. He was responsible almost solely for the look of most of the alien technology, the creature and everything.

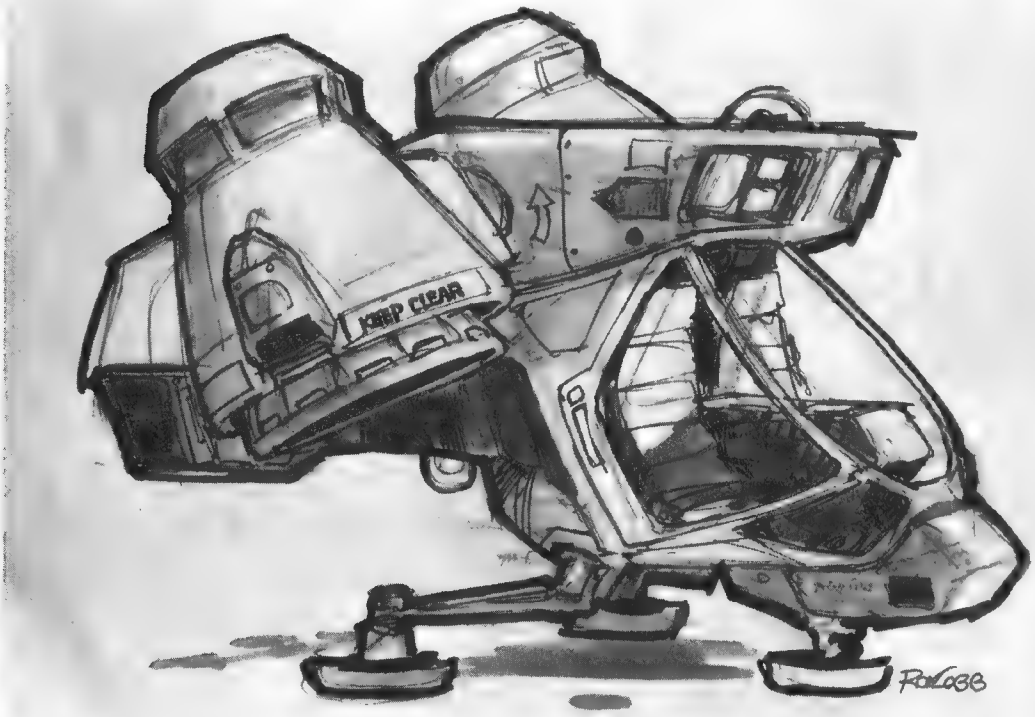
I UNDERSTAND THAT THE FILM WAS SOMEWHAT PROBLEM PLAGUED. COULD YOU RELATE ANY OF THESE PROBLEMS?

I saw that there were a lot of disappointments, there were a lot of misunderstandings, and there was a lack of clarity and a lack of direction in the design of the film, but I expected a lot of this to happen anyhow. It was a big production, there was a lot of money involved, there were a lot of people involved, so I knew that it wouldn't be a hard, tight concept. I knew that they would stray away from Dan's script, so I wasn't as disappointed about it as Dan was. It's a shame. I think they should have stuck closer to the original concept and they should have given some of the designers a little more freedom because they would take ideas up to the point they could understand them, and if they couldn't understand them, they would insist on something else that had no place. And so there's a lot of things that were very annoying. But it was the first time a lot of these people had made a film of this type, and they weren't aware of the sensitivities that certain people like Dan and I might have about certain consistencies. All in all it proceeded well enough in my point of view. There is no point in getting into specific personalities and things. There was just misunderstanding and a lack of clarity.

I think that the real probelms were in Dan's sphere, because of what they did with the rewriting. It's terrible, sloppy kind of revisions, some of them pointless and some of them very difficult for Dan to tighten the thing back up and keep the thing consistent and have it make sense. I was more concerned with certain consistent looks and certain elements of believability being retained. Sometimes I could make my point and other times I couldn't simply because they couldn't understand them. I just couldn't communicate certain ideas. I didn't have enough power. Dan had more power than I did, so it was frustrating. So it was just assorted disappointments, which is all to say that the final film is not the film that Dan and I would have made, or Dan, Giger and I or Ron Shusett. It's not exactly that film, but it is close enough to Dan and Ron primarily because they stayed there and fought for it inch by inch, day by day to keep it from going too far from the original really strong concept in the original script. That fades into the distance. I think that most people will be fairly impressed by the film. There's a good look to it and a number of spectacular ideas that survive and a few that were innovated from the staff that were really quite good. Perhaps we didn't recognize how good they were at the time, but there were some good new ideas, though most of them weren't.

DO YOU RECALL ANY HUMOROUS INCIDENTS OR ANECDOTES?

Well, only the most ridiculous things that happened while we were watching them shoot. One of the things that Dan insisted on was that there be a cat on board. So there's a mascot, a kitty cat roams around the ship.



ALIEN

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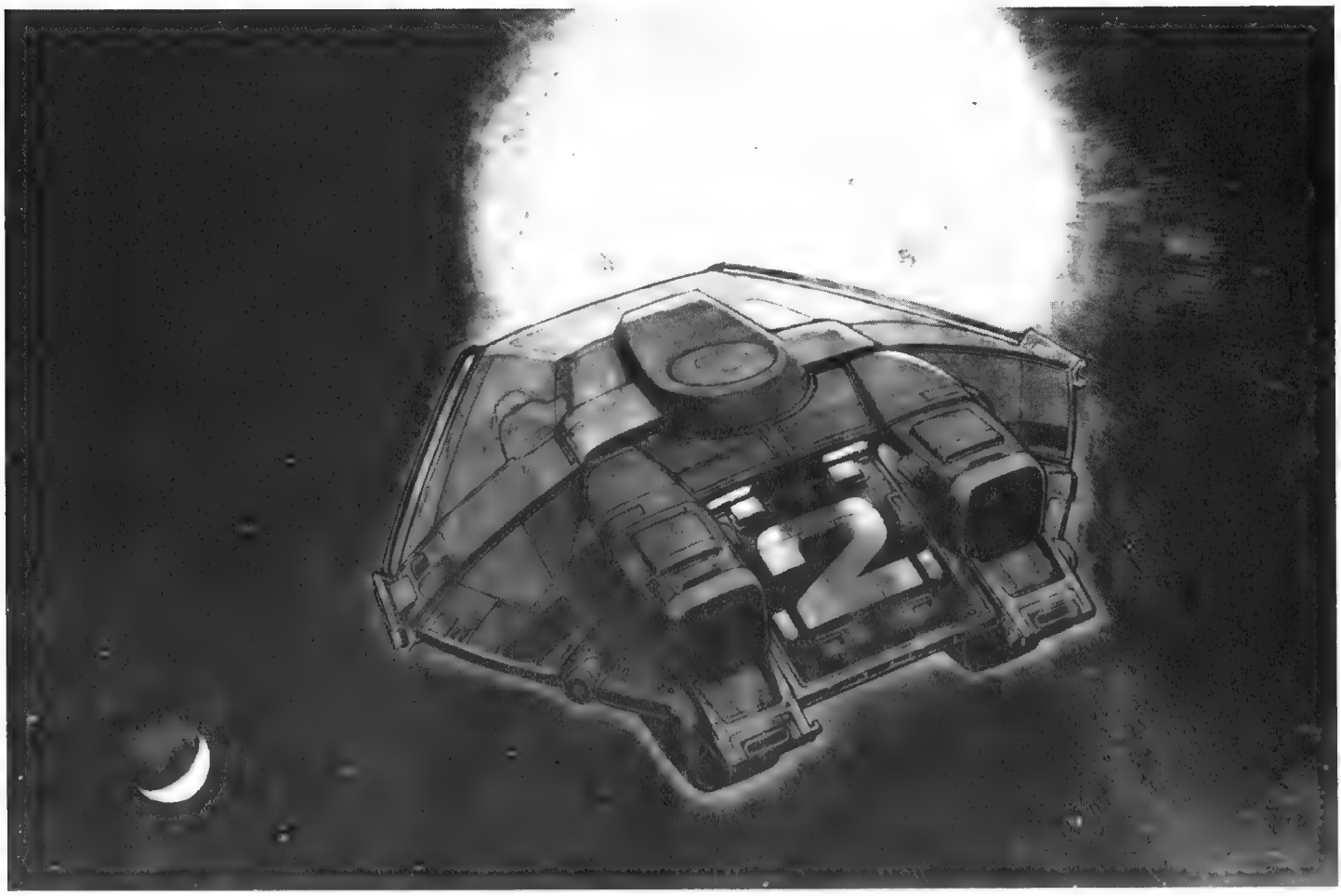
TWO PLACE, LONG RANGE HELI-JET WITH 2 FUSION/HELIUM ENGINES VECTORED FOR VTOL. CAN OPERATE FROM 2 EARTH ATMOSPHERES TO VACUUM.



Proproduction drawing by Ron Cobb for ALIEN. © 1979 Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

Of course, working with animals on a spaceship set creates all those ridiculous problems, so...

DID YOU HAVE A LITTLE KITTY LITTER BUILT INTO THE SHIP?

Just about. I had to design a cat box, a pressurized cat box, which eventually they decided was too elaborate. Anyhow, there were all these little elements to get this cat through all the scenes. They had a scene where we wanted to shoot the last surviving crew member desperately looking for the cat to rescue, to take if off from abaord ship because she has to leave because they are going to blow the whole ship up, and she's looking for the cat. So they had to have a scene where the cat was sleeping in a control seat, and she comes crawling in and finally sees it and startles the cat by touching a button and the seat jumps a little and the cat runs off, and she has to grab it, put it into this little box, and run out.

The whole thing, of course, was to get this cat to sleep in this little chair. So I just went out there one day and saw this ludicrous situation because here is the entire crew of this huge spaceship set, the control room, the lights, the camera, the dolly, the director, and the assisstant director, and the make-up people and all the actors, and the assorted little cat cages that they had full of cats for different takes because once the cat got startled, they had to use a different cat, so they all look alike. We're all sitting around there very tense, waiting, and everybody is being very quiet while someone is trying to get this cat to go to sleep on this control seat. So you're sitting there and everybody is being very quiet, and finally the assisstant director with this very loud megaphone--the public address system was shot--saying, "Stand by! The cat's lying down, the cat's lying down. Stand by!" Everybody's getting ready and ready, and finally he says, "What? It's asleep! It's asleep!!" and somebody says, "Go!" and everyone comes out and does the scene, and they shoot, "Here kitty, kitty. Here kitty kitty," going along until they startle the cat. And they have to do it all over again, and they have to get this other cat, and they have to be calm, calm and wait for this cat to go to sleep. It was amazing. Just amazing because the whole deck of the spaceship was filled.

The control rooms and aid stations and landing gear were thirty feet high--the immense landing legs on the surface of the planet. They used children in spacesuits, much like they did in DESTINATION MOON to make the ship look even larger. Those poor little kids were fainting in those spacesuits because it was so hot. They filled this whole stage full of fog, which is just kind of an oil solution on an element and is just kind of ghastly, horribly hot. And these kids were walking around in these heavily padded suits, little red faces dying inside. I don't know. By and large it was all kind of desperate and grim, I think.

I've always had a very realistic idea of what was involved in making a film, so it didn't bother me a great deal. It was just a lot of hard work, a lot of disappointments, but it was very exciting to see something you drew the plans for being built--these immense sets and huge set pieces, and to be able to stand and walk through them is always something I've wanted to do. I must say I do enjoy learning. I do enjoy making a mistake and realizing how to do it next time. There was a lot of that. It was a tremendous amount of accumulation. Aha, this and that. Now I see how to do it. How to use materials and how to fit lights in. Tremendous increase in my confidence in designing sets, which wasn't exactly my job in the film, but I actually managed to literally design a

number of the sets in a very, very complete way. I supervised the dressing of them and everything, so I hope that in the future I will have more power and certainly more confidence and ability. There were a lot of things I hadn't known. It was a great experience for me. It was not enjoyable to Dan, but I hope to do it again. I hope to work with Dan again, of course, in some future project.

MAYBE IN A FILM OF THEY BITE?

Yes!

YOU PROCEEDED THEN TO CONAN. HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH THAT?

Well, while I was working at Fox I started meeting a lot of people. People would come by and look at the ALIEN designs and things. Essentially, they were lying in wait for me when I got back. These people were sort of lined up. It was really nice. A fellow who owns the property now came by and asked if I would be interested in doing a series of design concepts and things, preproduction for CONAN, and also John Milius wanted me to work on his film, and I was sort of obligated to John to work on his film first, but he was getting a little involved in 1941. I was resting, but I decided that I would give CONAN a few weeks until John got started, and it turned out that John got delayed a little longer, so I ended up working for about a month for CONAN and really got into it. I really got into the concept. I hope to work in the future with Ed Pressman again, bit I had now stuck with John, which will be quite a challenge because the film with John will be an early Western, kind of a mountain man thing, so I'll be designing costumes and Indian villages, and strange garbs and outfits, and weird landscapes for this group of characters--guides and trappers in the Rocky Mountains soon after Lewis and Clark. Almost like CONAN in a way, a kind of challenge to recreate how it must have looked to these men at this time. Crossing the Rockies at this time was like exploring the far side of the moon. That's currently what I've been doing. I've been getting offers to work on toys and other films and it's terrific. It's all openning out.

WHAT KIND OF LOOK DID YOU WANT TO GIVE THE CONAN FILM?

The what has become almost a kind of traditional look. Conan has become an almost western kind of grab bag thing where you simply go in and take things off of the shelf. I mean you take a Viking helmet here, and a Roman shield there and a Persian quiver and kind of patch all these things together from all these ancient societies of our historical period.

In a way I suppose that is what Howard was doing anyway was rewriting our ancient history, but I became more intrigued with the idea of designing all these cultures from scratch so that they might look like they were the origin of the culture of the Celts and the Picts and the Scotts and people we come to know later, but looking more like origins and having a more primal look. That's what I kind of call an applied anthropology. Where you take and invent an entire culture of architecture, costumes, religions, the look of everything and have it all fresh and new, and that is what I would like to see a lot more of, and I had an opportunity to suggest a lot of these things. I don't mean to be outrageously different. I mean it to be reminiscent of these early historical cultures, but it should look earlier, should look Atlantean--something never quite seen. You can't identify it as Japanese or Mesopotamian or Egyptian, but that's it. Perhaps CONAN will be going on much later as well, and I might be able to get back on the project. I'd like to.

DID YOU HAVE TO DESIGN THINGS WITH SCHWARZENEGGER IN MIND AS CONAN?

Yes, yes, 'cause I was wondering about Arnold's sort of Steve Reeves image, which I've never particularly liked. That gymnasium, shaved build in these kind of historical settings, which to me is a very contemporary look. You know, that slim waist, massive biceps, that's not a very natural thing and to me always looks unreal, but since learning that Arnold has come down in his build and really wants to fill out to a really functional physique, 'cause he's not competing any more, so I'm actually beginning to get more impressed with the idea that he might be appropriate. I hear that he's very impressed with playing the part with dignity and taking it very seriously and wants to do a really great job and understands how artificial he could look unless he does something about it. I find him a much more acceptable idea than I did at first.

FROM LOOKING AT YOUR DESIGNS, I ASSUME IT WILL BE A BIG BUDGET SPECTACULAR WITH A LOT OF SPECIAL EFFECTS AND MATTE PAINTINGS, ETC.

Oh yes, all live with location shooting all over the world. They're thinking of Ireland, Afghanistan, spectacular settings, huge mutant armies. Rick Baker will do the make-up on the mutant soldiers. It might take him years to do it. Gigantic budget. It's getting off to a very spectacular start. We'll see how far it goes, but they're excited about it and want to do it well. And it's a pretty good screenplay, too. Oliver Stone's screenplay really has possibilities.

DO YOU KNOW WHEN THEY PLAN TO START SHOOTING?

That's a little hazy, but I think that they will start certainly within the next year. Hopefully sooner.

AND NOW SOME OF YOUR ARTWORK HAS COME OUT FROM AUSTRALIA IN NEW BOOKS.

They should be available here, but I know they are difficult to get. The book people who are distributing them here in Berkley or Oakland have been poor in filling orders and things, so they aren't always where you can find them. It's a shame because I'm very pleased with the books. I've had a number of them published here of the 60's cartoons and none of them are as well done as the Australian books.

THE BOOKS ARE THE COBB BOOK AND COBB AGAIN. WHAT WERE SOME OF THE OTHER BOOKS?

There have been a number of other books, but they are no longer available from Sawyer Press. Raw Sewage, Mah Fellow Americans, My Fellow Americans, RCB 25--they are kind of collector's items, but no longer available. There are also thousands and thousands of miscellaneous textbooks and newspapers that still reprint them all over the world. I still get requests for textbooks, dictionaries, encyclopedias...they still live on. That was one of the things I had in mind was to have topical cartoons that might have longer lives because most of them make no sense a week after they've been drawn, but if I could make broad, general statements about society in general in the largest way, they may have the life of a parable or an ironic image. It seems like a lot of them have that. They still work. I did some specific stuff on Viet Nam, but by and large I tried to avoid that. If something happened...in fact a lot of cartoons I did during the Viet Nam war were on war in general, and they're still reprinted, but I can't keep track of them.

AND WHAT OTHER PROSPECTS ARE THERE IN THE FUTURE?

Well, there's JEDEDIAH SMITH, there's They Bite--I'd like to work with Dan in that in the next screenplay, there are a number of films that Ed Pressman is interested in having me work on. I've started dabbling in my own writing and am trying a couple of screenplays. I became convinced that I could do it from watching a lot of the hassles and changes in the ALIEN script, so I got a lot of opportunity to kind of think in terms of writing scenes and making suggestions. It was a discovery to me that I could

do it. It is Dan's film, so there are things in ALIEN that are not the way I would have done them. We are different people. So hell, I should just write my own screenplay so I could encompass what I envision as a potential film. It's been a good exercise for me. Again, another learning experience, which I enjoyed. I may never do any original movie scripts, but I certainly hope to do something with fourth or fifth down the line, so that's very exciting to me. I am always interested in painting, illustration, and publishing, so I hope to find the time to do that. And even cartooning again, if the opportunity presents itself, which I have done off and on. A spot in the paper or a topic of something. I still do an occasional cartoon, but by and large I think I want to move into film during this period.

GOOD LUCK. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ABOUT THE STATE OF THE ART OF ILLUSTRATION AND WHAT THE NEW ARTIST SHOULD NOTE?

Well, it seems to be a golden age era for the popular art of illustration. I think that it's very exciting because I've always considered painting a folk art, a kind of more accessible thing. Whenever art becomes too elitest, too intellectual, strays too far away from this, even though it may have a great deal of value, even though it may indeed represent exciting new explorations in perception, minimal painting and such, it becomes obvious that if the body of the culture cannot really become that excited about it, it's too personal. Even though it may have this value for the artist, it's inevitably going to result in a falling away of interest.

The frontiers of art today are most exciting most of all to the painters they involve. Again, I stress that I sympathize with that. It is interesting to explore this and it is worth getting excited about now and then, but it is clear that the reactions taken place mean a tremendous revitalization of the popular art form, of story-telling, of myth making. I think that the imaginative and genuinely creative use of representational art, which is the folk art of our society, a kind of pragmatic, technical society that likes paintings like cameras see. It is wide open and anyone that loves draftsmanship and can generate and create worlds that we all want to see will do very, very well. It really is a golden era. It seems to be accelerating rather than running down.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

You're quite welcome.

* * *

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THE MUTANT HANDBOOK

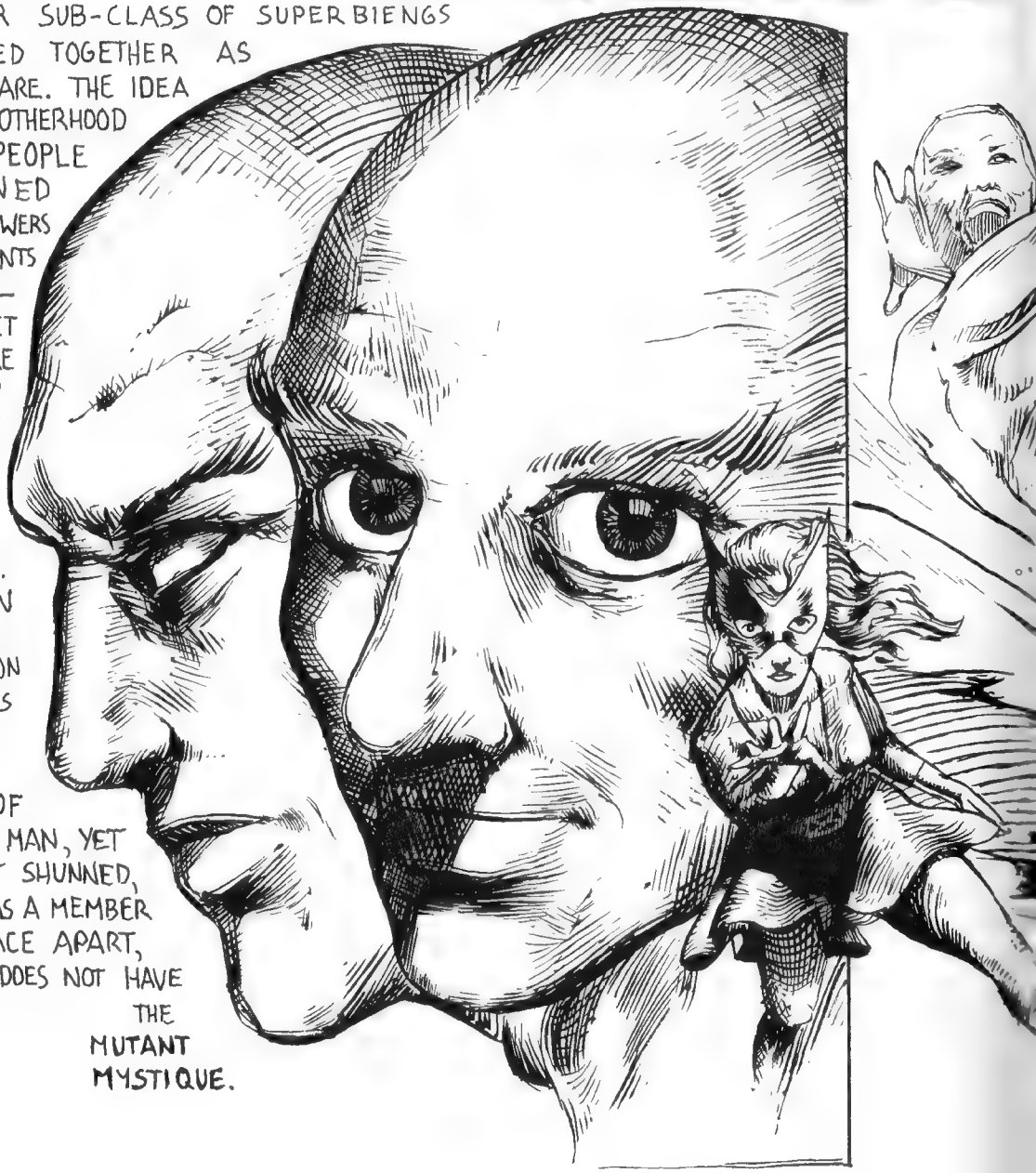
CHAPTER 1: *The Mutant Mystique*

MUTANTS AND

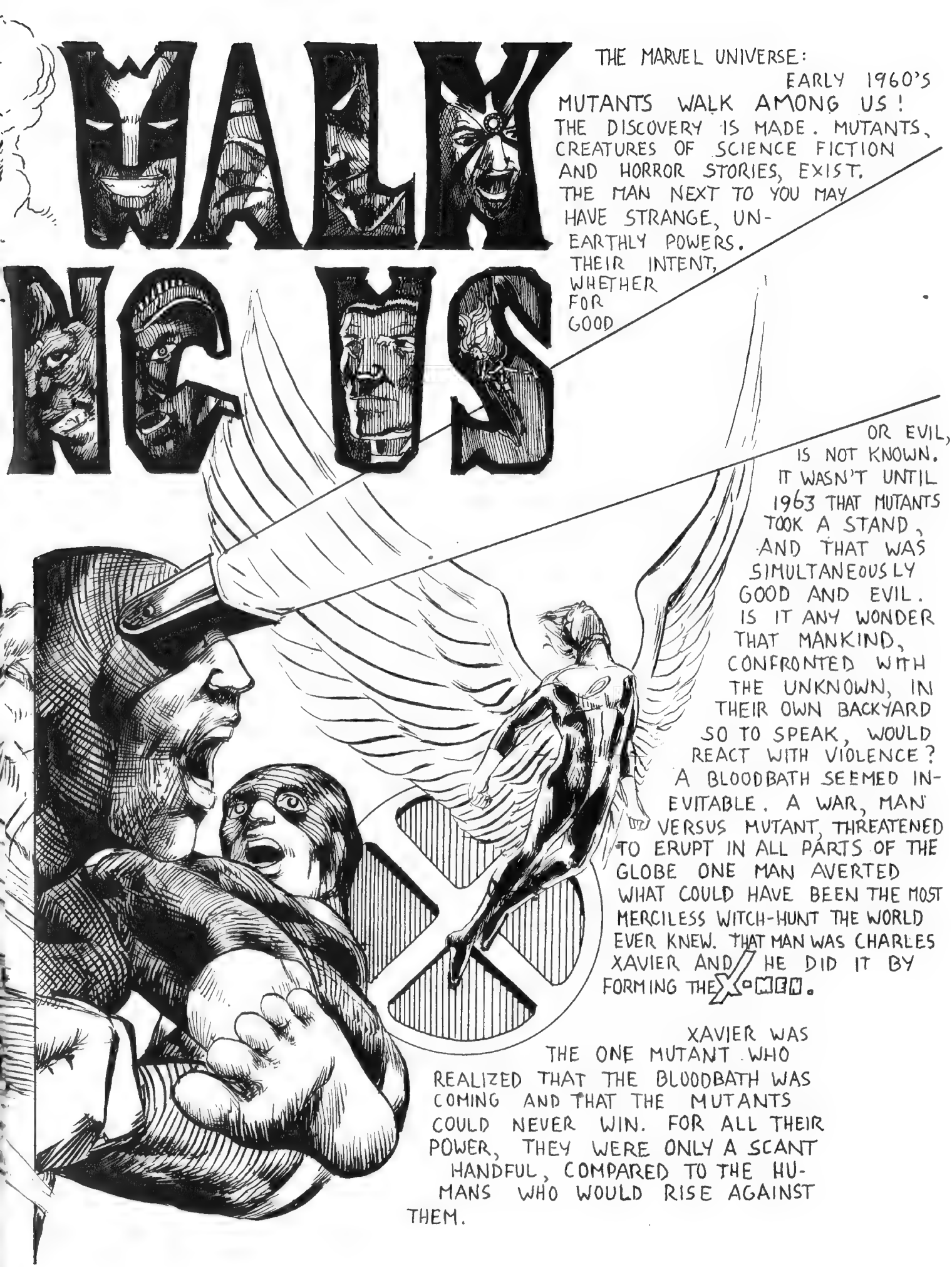
THERE IS A CERTAIN MYSTIQUE ABOUT MARVEL'S MUTANTS, ONE THAT SETS THEM APART FROM OTHER SUPERBEINGS IN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE, AND FROM MUTANTS AT ANY OTHER COMPANY. THIS IS DUE TO THE FACT THAT MARVEL'S MUTANTS ARE SO INVOLVED WITH EACH OTHER THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL CAN BE VIEWED AS MERELY PART OF A SINGLE STORY THAT BEGAN WITH X-MEN #1; THE SAGA OF MUTANTS IN A WORLD OF HUMANS.

NO OTHER SUB-CLASS OF SUPERBIENGS IS LUMPED TOGETHER AS MUTANTS ARE. THE IDEA OF A BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL PEOPLE WHO GAINED SUPER-POWERS IN ACCIDENTS IS LUDICROUS, YET THERE ARE CERTAINLY AS MANY OF THEM AS THERE ARE EVIL MUTANTS.

CAPTAIN AMERICA IS A PERSON WITH POWERS GREATER THAN THOSE OF MORTAL MAN, YET HE IS NOT SHUNNED, VIEWED AS A MEMBER OF A RACE APART, FOR HE DOES NOT HAVE THE MUTANT MYSTIQUE.



MUTANTS WALK AMONG US!



THE MARVEL UNIVERSE: EARLY 1960'S

MUTANTS WALK AMONG US! THE DISCOVERY IS MADE. MUTANTS, CREATURES OF SCIENCE FICTION AND HORROR STORIES, EXIST. THE MAN NEXT TO YOU MAY HAVE STRANGE, UNEARTHLY POWERS. THEIR INTENT, WHETHER FOR GOOD OR EVIL, IS NOT KNOWN. IT WASN'T UNTIL 1963 THAT MUTANTS TOOK A STAND, AND THAT WAS SIMULTANEOUSLY GOOD AND EVIL. IS IT ANY WONDER THAT MANKIND, CONFRONTED WITH THE UNKNOWN, IN THEIR OWN BACKYARD SO TO SPEAK, WOULD REACT WITH VIOLENCE? A BLOODBATH SEEMED INEVITABLE. A WAR, MAN VERSUS MUTANT, THREATENED TO ERUPT IN ALL PARTS OF THE GLOBE ONE MAN AVERTED WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN THE MOST MERCILESS WITCH-HUNT THE WORLD EVER KNEW. THAT MAN WAS CHARLES XAVIER AND HE DID IT BY FORMING THE X-MEN.

XAVIER WAS THE ONE MUTANT WHO REALIZED THAT THE BLOODBATH WAS COMING AND THAT THE MUTANTS COULD NEVER WIN. FOR ALL THEIR POWER, THEY WERE ONLY A SCANT HANDFUL, COMPARED TO THE HUMANS WHO WOULD RISE AGAINST THEM.

HE ALSO KNEW THAT SOME MUTANTS, PERSECUTED AND HOUNDED, WOULD STRIKE BACK IN SELF-DEFENCE OR ARROGANCE. IF THEY WERE NOT STOPPED IT WOULD BE THE END FOR **HOMO-SUPERIOR**. THERE HAD TO BE A BUFFER BETWEEN MUTANTKIND AND HUMANITY. BY FORMING THE **X-MEN**, XAVIER TOOK ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PREVENTING GLOBAL WAR, AND TRANSFERRED THAT RESPONSIBILITY TO FIVE SCARED UNSURE TEENAGERS.

THE **X-MEN!**

THE STEEL SHATTERING OPTIC POWERS OF **SCOTT SUMMERS.**

THE RATHER FEEBLE TELEKINETICS OF **JEAN GREY.**

THE ANTHROPOID AGILITY AND PRETERNATURAL STRENGTH OF **HANK MCCOY.** THE WINTRY POWERS OF **BOBBY DRAKE**. THE WINGS OF **WARREN WORTHINGTON**. THE POWERS OF THESE FIVE: CYCLOPS, MARVEL GIRL, BEAST ICEMAN, AND ANGEL, HAD TO STEM THE TIDE OF FEAR AND PREJUDICE OF ALMOST THREE BILLION PEOPLE.

THE FIRST SKIRMISH CAME QUICKLY.

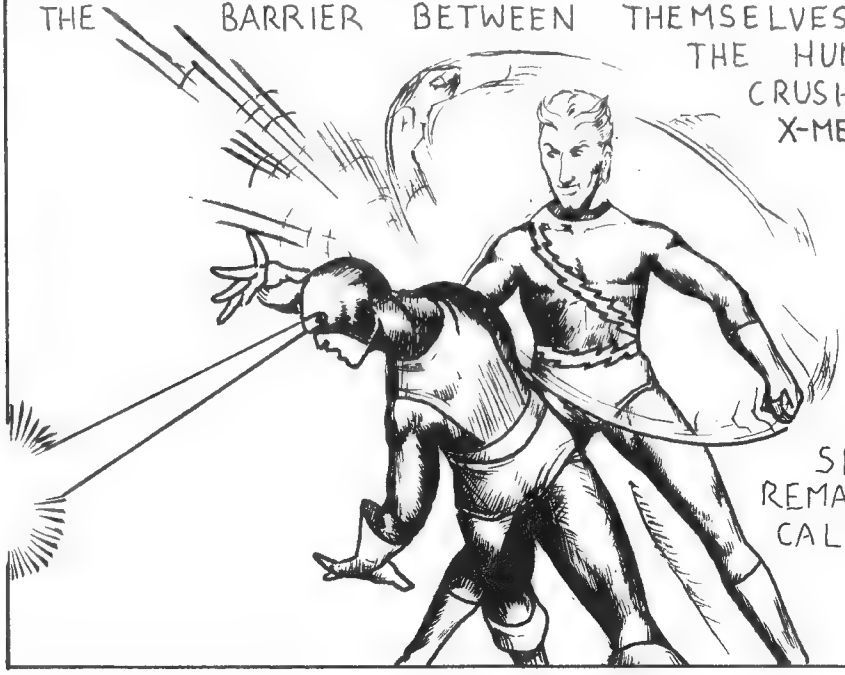
MAGNETO, EARTH'S MOST POWERFUL MUTANT, FELT HE COULD SINGLE-HANDEDLY TAKE ON THE WORLD.

HIS ATTACK ON CAPE-CITADEL WOULD HAVE TRIGGERED THE BLOOD-BATH XAVIER FEARED SO MUCH--

--IF NOT FOR THE INTERVENTION OF THE X-MEN.

INSTEAD OF A SAVAGE ATTACK ON HUMANS BY MUTANTS, MANKIND WAS CONFRONTED WITH A CLASH OF MUTANTS, OF GOOD AND EVIL. THE FEAR AND RESENTMENT OF THE UNKNOWN WAS STILL STRONG, BUT THERE WAS ENOUGH UNSURITY TO KEEP THEM INACTIVE. MUTANTS HAD COME OUT INTO THE OPEN, AND HUMANS DID NOTHING. THE FIRST OBSTACLE WAS PASSED. THE SITUATION WAS NO LONGER AS EXPLOSIVE, THOUGH IT WAS STILL DANGEROUS. THE FORCES AT WORK COULD HAVE TIME TO SETTLE.

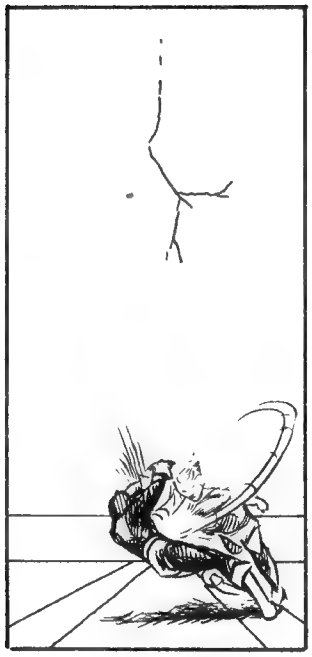
IN THE MONTHS TO FOLLOW, THOSE FORCES ALIGNED THEMSELVES. ON ONE SIDE THERE WERE THE HUMANS, DISTRUSTING AND NERVOUS, WITH THE POWER TO DESTROY THE OTHERS YET UNWILLING TO USE IT. THE X-MEN WERE FIGHTING TO KEEP THE HUMANS CALM, TO KEEP THE TWO SIDES FROM MEETING. MAGNETO APPOINTED HIMSELF GENERAL OF THE OTHER FORCE, THE EVIL MUTANTS WHO WANTED THE WORLD UNDER THEIR DOMINION, AS THEY WERE OBVIOUSLY SUPERIOR. THE BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS (BLOB, UNUS, VANISHER, MASTERMIND, QUICKSILVER, SCARLET WITCH, AND THE TOAD) BECAME THE COUNTERPARTS OF THE X-MEN. THE BROTHERHOOD DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO CRUSHING THE BARRIER BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND THE HUMANS, CRUSHING THE X-MEN.



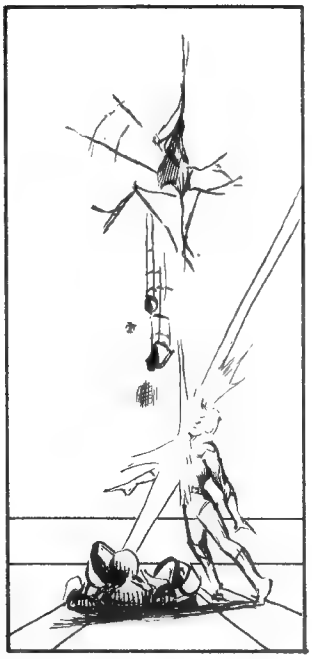
AS SUCH, THE SITUATION REMAINED CALM.

THEN THE HUMANS MADE THEIR FIRST STATEMENT.

MUTANTS ARE NOT TO BE PERMITTED.



THEY MUST BE COLLECTED, STUDIED, AND IF, NECESSARY, **DESTROYED.**

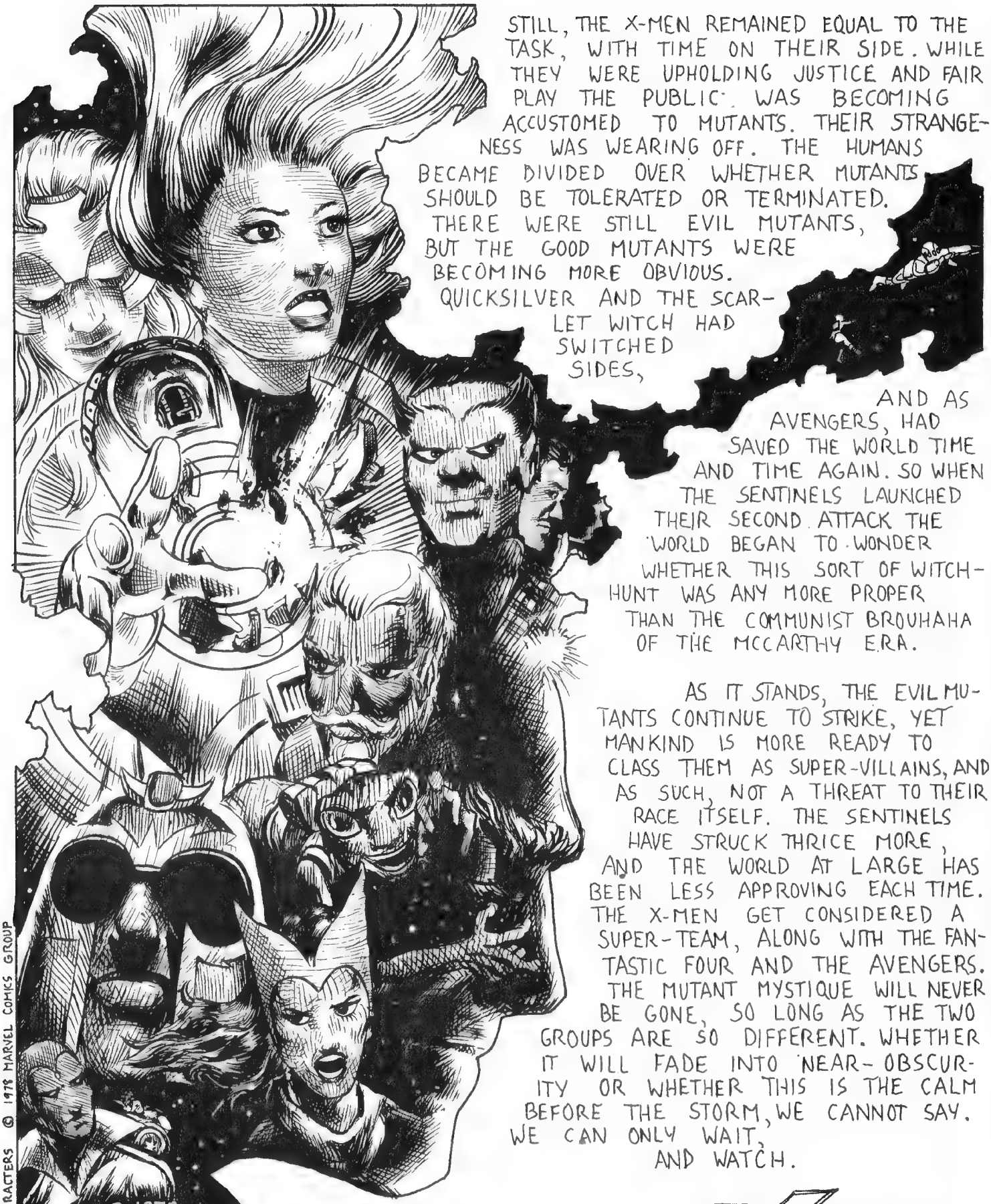


IF HUMANITY WAS ACTING EN MASSE, THE "MUTANT PROBLEM" WOULD HAVE SOON BEEN OVER.

AS IT WAS--

IT WAS JUST DOCTOR **BOLIVAR TRASK** AND HIS MUTANT-HUNTING ROBOTS, **THE SENTINELS.**

THE **X-MEN** BEING READILY ACCESSIBLE, HE CHOSE THEM AS HIS FIRST TARGETS. NOW THE X-MEN WERE BATTLING ON **TWO** FRONTS. THEIR FIGHT AGAINST THE **EVIL** MUTANTS HAD PLACED THEM IN THE PUBLIC EYE WHERE THEY HAD TO REBUFF **HUMANITY'S FORCES** AGAINST THE MUTANTS. THE SENTINELS WERE DESTROYED AND THE THREAT NEUTRALIZED, BUT ONLY FOR THE MOMENT. NOW THE X-MEN HAD TO BE VIGILANTLY PROTECTING BOTH SIDES FROM EACH OTHER, FOR THE HUMANS CLASSED THE X-MEN AS JUST MORE MUTANTS AND THE THE EVIL MUTANTS CLASSED THE X-MEN AS OBSTACLES TO WORLD DOMINATION.



STILL, THE X-MEN REMAINED EQUAL TO THE TASK, WITH TIME ON THEIR SIDE. WHILE THEY WERE UPHOLDING JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY THE PUBLIC WAS BECOMING ACCUSTOMED TO MUTANTS. THEIR STRANGENESS WAS WEARING OFF. THE HUMANS BECAME DIVIDED OVER WHETHER MUTANTS SHOULD BE TOLERATED OR TERMINATED. THERE WERE STILL EVIL MUTANTS, BUT THE GOOD MUTANTS WERE BECOMING MORE OBVIOUS. QUICKSILVER AND THE SCARLET WITCH HAD SWITCHED SIDES,

AND AS AVENGERS, HAD SAVED THE WORLD TIME AND TIME AGAIN. SO WHEN THE SENTINELS LAUNCHED THEIR SECOND ATTACK THE WORLD BEGAN TO WONDER WHETHER THIS SORT OF WITCH-HUNT WAS ANY MORE PROPER THAN THE COMMUNIST BROUHAHA OF THE MCCARTHY ERA.

AS IT STANDS, THE EVIL MUTANTS CONTINUE TO STRIKE, YET MANKIND IS MORE READY TO CLASS THEM AS SUPER-VILLAINS, AND AS SUCH, NOT A THREAT TO THEIR RACE ITSELF. THE SENTINELS HAVE STRUCK THRICE MORE, AND THE WORLD AT LARGE HAS BEEN LESS APPROVING EACH TIME. THE X-MEN GET CONSIDERED A SUPER-TEAM, ALONG WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR AND THE AVENGERS. THE MUTANT MYSTIQUE WILL NEVER BE GONE, SO LONG AS THE TWO GROUPS ARE SO DIFFERENT. WHETHER IT WILL FADE INTO NEAR-OBSCURITY OR WHETHER THIS IS THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM, WE CANNOT SAY. WE CAN ONLY WAIT, AND WATCH.

ALL CHARACTERS © 1978 MARVEL COMICS GROUP

© 1978 by:
TEXT: KURT BUSIEK
VISUALS: SCOTT McLEOD

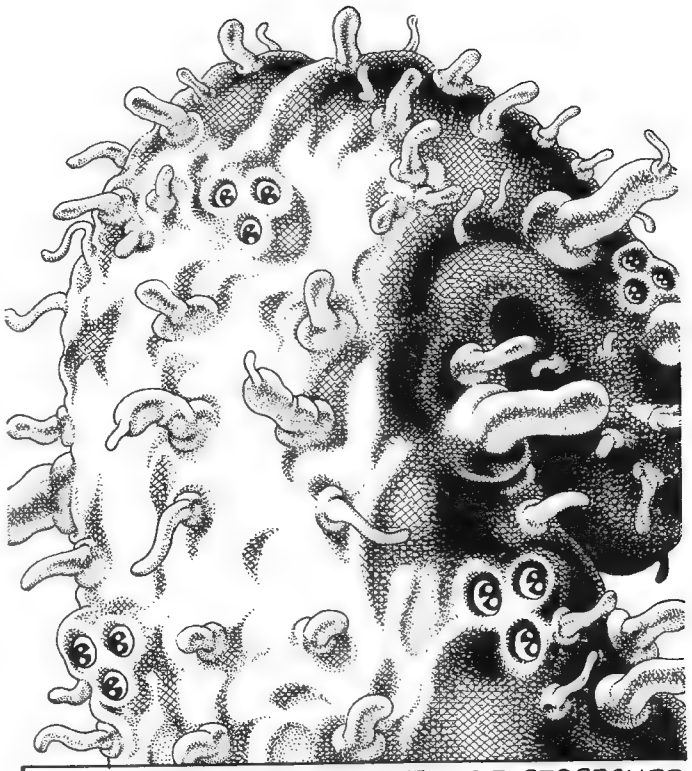
Next: The X-men

An Overview

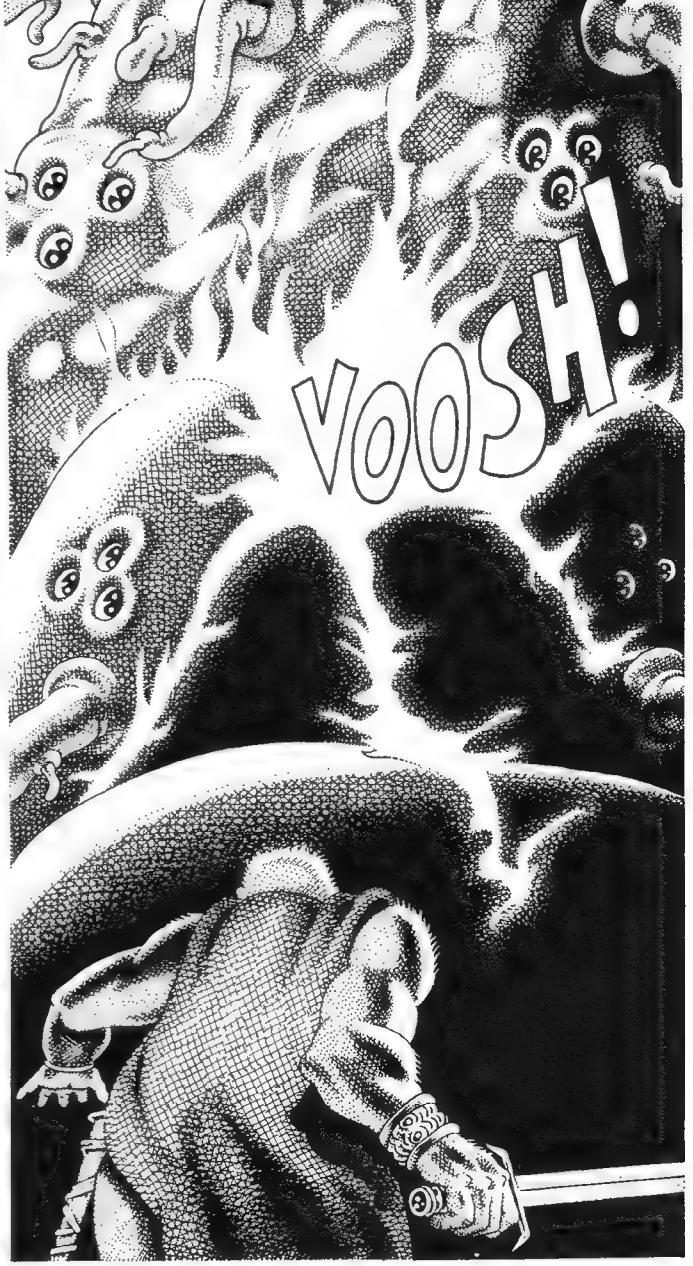
THE NEW COMPANION MAGAZINE TO THE "RBCC"

FANTASTIC EXPLOITS

Volume Two, Number One



THE OIL SPATTERED AND WITH IT STRETCHED THE FLAMES WHICH BURNED UP THE SINUOUS CREATURE IN PATHS WHICH SCATTERED IN HALF A DOZEN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.



Comics fandom is producing more talented artists today than ever before in its history! I know, because I've been involved with the RBCC since 1970, first as assisstant editor and then as editor and publisher since August, 1974. Never before have I seen as many truly talented artists in fandom as there are now. The art staff of the RBCC is now double what it ever was before at any time! Due to this increased amount of talent available to me, I'm launching a second magazine with an RBCC type of format. The title is FANTASTIC EXPLOITS. This title was previously published by the former editor of the RBCC, G.B. Love. With his permission, I am reviving this title but starting the numbering over again with Volume Two, #1 because it will be quite different from the previous run of FANTASTIC EXPLOITS. FE will be printed on the exact same paper the RBCC is but will run a total of 68 pages, with only, perhaps, two pages of ads at the most. Thus it will have more pages of features than an issue of the RBCC does. Also unlike the RBCC, each issue will have *FULL COLOR* front and back covers. KERRY GAMMILL is working up a *FULL COLOR WRAPAROUND COVER* painting for the first issue based on the story "Something Lost, Something Never Found" which appears in RBCC #147. RON WILBER was quite taken with this sword and sorcery tale and in keeping with his desire to move into more serious comic art (as opposed to satirical comic art), Ron is doing a complete comic strip adaptation of this story whose text version was in RBCC. Ron has been given carte blanche to make his adaptation as long as he wants to make it. Ron's enthusiasm for this story is evident in the two sample panels from his adaptation above and at the right. Ron wanted to adapt it. I didn't ask him to do it, he asked me! Although FE will generally not feature reprints, in issue #2 I plan to reprint Kerry Gammill's 16 page adaptation of Norman Spinrad's "Subjectivity" from RBCC #'s 124-127. FE will be even more heavily art oriented than the RBCC and will include a John Carter of Mars portfolio by BRET BLEVINS, JIM KUZEE and others. There will also be an article on DEADMAN (with art by FRED HEMBECK and STEVE BISSETTE) as well as one comparing the two films with the novel version of INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (art by MARC HEMPEL). Other features are in the works. FE will not have regular columns at first but may develop some later. We plan to start off by publishing 3 times a year, working up to 4.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

(Note: These are special introductory rates only. Sub rates will increase to the normal level upon publication of FANTASTIC EXPLOITS #1 in late May)

THIRD CLASS: 5/$12.50, 10/$24.00, 15/$36.00, 20/$45.00

FIRST CLASS: 5/$18.00, 10/$34.00, 15/$46.00, 20/$55.00

SINGLE COPIES: $3.00 + 75¢ postage or $3.00 + $1.50 postage for First Class mailing.

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COMING THIS MAY

CRITIQUE

10. Superb
9. Excellent
8. Very Good
7. Good
6. Fairly Good
5. Fair
4. Tolerable
3. Poor
2. Very Poor
1. Worthless

CRITIQUE is basically a review column, but we won't specifically recommend that you buy or not buy a particular item. We will review each item to the best of our ability and let each reader take it from there. We will be reviewing almost any item (fanzines, prozines, records, portfolios, tapes, posters, or just anything of general interest) with one exception. We will not be doing any SFCA publications for obvious reasons. CRITIQUE offers a readership of over 2,000 people and CRITIQUE will also offer the publisher of any item we review up to one hundred words of free space to rebut his review, if he chooses to do so, providing his review is less than an "8" rating. All rebuttals to appear in the next column must be in our hands at least five days before the ad deadline of the next RB&CC or they will be run in the following issue. If you have an item you would like reviewed, send a copy of it to: CRITIQUE, 10885 PARKDALE AVENUE, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92126

A few things to remember: Where UNDERGROUNDS are concerned, you must be 18 or older to order them. All fanzines reviewed are 8 1/2 x 11 with offset printing and wraparound binding unless otherwise noted. From time to time there may be a publication over which two of our reviewers have wide disagreement and in which case two reviews of the same book will be run in the interest of fairness.

A FINAL NOTE: The only reason for CRITIQUE is as a service to fandom. If you appreciate what we are trying to do then let us know. Your support can be shown in numerous ways: If you order an item because of our review then please mention CRITIQUE in your order, and of course the RB&CC would appreciate your subscription and advertising support. Naturally, your comments are welcomed.

JAMES VAN HISE / EDITOR

A CONTRACT WITH GOD *AND OTHER TENEMENT STORIES* - $4.95 - 196 pages - 6 x 9 - Published by Baronet Publishing Co., 509 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011

This is a book of four stories written and drawn by Will Eisner in a free form comic strip format (panel borders are used as often as not). The stories all center around an area of tenements in the Bronx and concern the people therein as they lived in the 1930s.

The first story, "A Contract With God", is the most ambitious as it tells the story of a man's entire life. The man is Jewish and the story deals with a contract he makes with God (a figurative one, although it seems real enough to him) when he is a child. The man feels the contract has been violated when his daughter dies, whereupon he changes his entire life-style and becomes a business tycoon. At the conclusion he makes another contract with God which he feels cannot be violated this time, whereupon he drops dead of a heart attack. The story seems to do a lot of thrashing around as it attempts to come to grips with this idea. It even has an epilogue which seems to point to life being cyclical. There are contrasts which show that while he lived by the contract he was selfless, while afterwards he became selfish, but this is just the old chestnut of the bitter tycoon who became a success after turning his back on everything but his own desires. The story is apparently supposed to be ironic but it could have done a lot more with the idea than it did.

The other three stories, "The Street Singer", "The Super" and "The Cookalein" are pretty much just slice of life stories and don't have any real solid plot the way "A Contract With God" did.

In "The Street Singer", a man sings in the alley ways of the tenements for any money people will throw him, and he meets a woman who offers to turn his talent into a career. After returning home, he realizes that he can't remember the woman's address, an unlikely situation at best.

"The Super" is a character story which shows the odd facets of personality possessed by the superintendent of a building and how a series of bizarre circumstances drive him to suicide. It's an interesting "things are not always what they seem" story which tends to show that in life no one is all good or all bad. It also shows a very realistic portrayal of life among the poor rather than the noble indigent who is portrayed in many stories of this type (including Eisner's own SPIRIT tales of the forties.)

"The Cookalien" is another slice of life story about many different characters and how their lives are changed over the course of one summer. Too many of the people are painted in the easy bold stroke of the cliche' to really accomplish very much (the man and woman pretending to wealth to land rich spouses, the adultress caught in the act by her husband, the adulterer who finally leaves his wife). There are a couple interesting touches, though, in that the focus of the story completely alters from one set of characters at the beginning to a person who, at first, is a minor character but becomes a major character due to the actions of others around him. The story is interesting but other than the setting of the time in which it takes place, doesn't really offer the reader very much.

Eisner was apparently trying to take the step from comic books into more realistic adult fiction, while at the same time straddling both tracks. The main flaw in this book is that it lacks a true direction. We really don't know what he was trying to say with all of this other than seeing his recreations of life in the depression era tenements. While reading this I had the feeling I was reading the background for events which were probably a lot more interesting. His character portrayals are only sometimes successful and seldom even approach what he achieved in, for instance, the Spirit strip "Ten Minutes" and the character of Freddy.

I know what Eisner was trying to do in this book, and to some degree he is successful, but not to the degree he could have been.

RATING 7 / JAMES VAN HISE

FANTASY NEWSLETTER - Published monthly, subs $5.00 a year, $6.00 in Canada, $9.00 elsewhere - 12 pages - Published by Paul Allen, 1015 West 36th Street, Loveland, Co. 80537

As the name suggests, this very informative, well printed newsletter covers the fantasy field in depth. Combining the best of two worlds--the literate approach to writing favored by science fiction fans, and the graphic approach in illustration favored by comic fans--editor Paul Allen lovingly lists in detail a wealth of information, reminding one of LOCUS, the sf newsletter, in its approach.

Issue 10/11 (a double issue) covers a number of topics, photo illustrated: Speciality Publishers, Trade Books, Robert E. Howard news, Work in Progress, Events and Awards, The British Scene, Recordings, Fantasy Wargaming, Magazines, Paperback News, The Fan Press, Forthcoming Items, and current book releases by publisher and by month.

Occasionally one runs across a publication that clearly is a winner: a joy to read, re-read, informative, literate, and comprehensive in its own right. FANTASY NEWSLETTER is one such publication, recommended without reservations, which should dominate the fantasy field just as LOCUS dominates the science fiction field and RBCC and TBG dominate the comics field.

RATING 10 / GEORGE BEAHM

THE WIZARD KING by Wallace Wood - $10.00 - 56 pages (plus full color dj) - 8 3/4 x 11 1/4 - Published by Wallace Wood, Box 3733, Amity Station, New Haven, Conn. 06525

This is one nice book and it's high quality all the way. The strip, which occupies 44 pages of the book, is a revised and expanded version of the story which Wood serialized in WITZEND during its heyday. The WITZEND version was done in a pictofiction format with a loose style employed on the illustrations, but this version is the richly finished Wood art we all know and love.

The story is fantasy and concerns the elfin character Odkin who finds himself embroiled in a quest to secure a magic sword and then slay an ancient wizard king who lies trapped in suspended animation in the depths of a castle (the wizard king is immortal and when killed his essence will transfer to another body, thus awakening him.) Sorcerous battles and odd characters abound. The writing is very good and makes reading it as much fun as looking at it. The story is not complete in this volume, but an awful lot happens and the cliffhanger we're left with isn't so abrupt as to spoil the flow of the story (such as the LORD OF THE RINGS movie does).

This is intended to be the first of many publications such as this from Wood, and I look forward with anticipation to his future efforts.

RATING 10 / JAMES VAN HISE

FANFARE #2 - $2.50 - 68 pages - Published by Bill Spicer, 329 North Avenue 66, Los Angeles, California 90042. Subscriptions 4/$10.00

This publication is the successor to GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE. Whereas GSM focused only on comics, FANFARE has expanded those horizons to include films and other media related fare, just as the RBCC does. FANFARE is an excellent publication but I think it has one troublesome flaw. It tries to cover too much, and in so doing we no longer know what it's trying to do. The front cover of this issue is a good example. Not only does it cover feature Frazetta, The Lord of the Rings, Film Noir and Comic Books, Groucho and Us, and Lost In Space, but also "Roots Country Style" and "Whatever Happened To The Golddiggers?"!!! This is a rather jarring transition at best. The magazine still obviously appeals to fandom at large, and has much larger sales to dealers than ever before, so I wonder who they are trying to appeal to with articles on The Golddiggers and Country Music? Would the magazine sell any less if these articles weren't there? I doubt it sincerely. So why overdo the gloss and the newsstand hype? Are these articles important? Do they tell us something we should know? No, they don't. An article on CHARLIE'S ANGELS would have been just as noteworthy and just as valueless. I'm not saying that unusual articles shouldn't be included. Unlike many, I found the article in the first issue on rock music by a reactionary preacher to be interesting. To know what the other side believes, one has to listen to what they have to say, however ridiculous it may be. But FANFARE does neither itself nor its readership justice when it considers articles on Country Music and The Golddiggers to be of interest on any level to the people who read the rest of the magazine. In attempting to be viable and commercial, FANFARE tends to be overly commercial, and overtly so to the extent that its covers tend to slap us in the face with its commercial flummery, even though what's inside is of much more value and depth than the covers would lead us to believe.

The Movie Poster Art Of Frank Frazetta by William Stout is the first attempt to tackle this subject ambitiously. The eleven interior pages present all his movie poster work and the back cover rounds it off with another, for twelve pages on this subject.

Groucho And Us by Mark Evanier is a moving and touching portrayal of the declining years of Groucho Marx as witnessed by one of his most ardent admirers. It adequately communicates the sadness I too felt at seeing this man broken by age and infirmity, until his passing went all but unnoticed by the same media which totemized the death of Elvis with screaming headlines and television specials.

The article *Freelancing* by Clay Geerdes is interesting and valuable, although at times somewhat obvious. People anticipating getting into freelancing their work can pick up some useful tips, although at the same time the reader can't help but wonder at the author's own naivete' when he wrings his hands over the problems of dealing with the publishers of sleazy magazines and yet continues sending work to the same types of mags despite previous trouble.

The article on *LOST IN SPACE* was surprisingly enjoyable, despite my own low opinion of that series. Surprisingly, the author of the article, Samuel Maronie, looks at the show critically and objectively rather than merely handing out plaudets and ignoring the show's obvious problems. It's a good job.

Film Noir And Comic Books by Carl Macek discusses just what Film Noir is and applies it to a certain era and style of comics. It's an excellent article which covers its subject in depth. It's the type of article which could easily have appeared in the old GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE as it discusses comics from a point of view of knowledge and originality.

The Magic Of Middle-Earth by Bernie Zuber discusses not just the making of THE LORD OF THE RINGS but provides an overview of the rise of Tolkien's work to popularity as a whole.

There are other short articles and information pieces, some of them as fascinating as the much longer features.

This is a very good enterprise, and although it may have a couple stumbling blocks, it still does what it sets out to do much better than most magazines around.

RATING 9 / JAMES VAN HISE

ORANGE BODE', Vaughn Bode' at Syracuse: An Annotated Catalog - $7.00 - 164 pages - 6 3/4 x 8½ - Published by Bob Coughlin, 1837 Treetop Court, Marietta, Georgia 30062

The legality of publishing copyrighted art in a "catalog" and then selling the "catalog" has always remained a question in my mind. Well, this publication pushes that concept, I think, way beyond any limit there may

have been. Bob Coughlin has his entire collection of Syracuse University publications containing cartoons by Vaughn Bode' up for bid and this is the catalog. He has published it in this format so that he will also still have the items in some form for himself after they are sold. No doubt, something like this cost a lot to print, but publishing a catalog with a couple pages of different artists work on each page is quite different from publishing a 160 page catalog devoted entirely to the rare art of a single artist, and then selling it for seven dollars. Were this not issued under the auspices of being a catalog, it never would have been conceived without some sort of dispensation going to Bode's estate, and that still might happen since there are publishers slowly bringing all of Vaughn's art slowly back into print, but this one volume will preclude a large area of future publishing for them, and Bode's estate will not have seen a penny. I'm not saying that the ORANGE BODE' CATALOG is necessarily illegal, but neither am I saying that I think it's entirely ethical either.

Whatever the situation, it's a good job and of value to any collector of Vaughn's work, although the price strikes me as a tad on the steep side especially when the publisher expects to realize a profit from all of the material printed in it.

RATING 8 / JAMES VAN HISE

THE WEIRDO by Rodney Schroeter - 20¢ + S.A.S.E. - 4 pages 5 1/2 x 7 - Published by Rodney Schroeter, Rt. 1 Hwy DE 3268, Random Lake, Wisc. 53075

These four small pages are comprised of a strange little strip about a super-hero called The Weirdo. There are eight half-page episodes telling a complete story of The Weirdo's battle with Dr. Psycho. The art is crude and yet somehow appealing as it captures the bizarre atmosphere of this satirical tale perfectly. The style seems distantly influenced at times by Basil Wolverton but most of the time it doesn't seem to hearken back to any other artist. It's odd and it's amusing, and what the hell, it's only twenty cents.

RATING 7 / JAMES VAN HISE

CAPTIVE CHAINS - $1.50 + 25¢ postage - 68 pages - Published by Raymond Pettibone, SST Publications, P.O. Box 1, Lawndale, California 90260

The title of the previous zine reviewed would more aptly be tied to this one. It gives new dimensions to the word bizarre. I kid thee not! Allow me to quote the inscription on the inside front cover: *IN THIS ISSUE - no bronze-skinned barbarians, their wonderful muscles rippling, a strip of hide hiding---; no lush science fiction, art nouveau, mythology (pick 1) pieces to hang next to your McDonald's Neiman; no art as therapy for devotees of de Sade and Sacher-Masoch; no stories about peace-loving hippies vs. heartless authorities, set in the summer of love...2067; no superheroes for your kid brother.* Does that give you an idea of what this is like. No way in the world!

First I'll start off with the thirty-five page strip called "City Kids" by Raymond Pettibone. In his cover letter with this zine, Raymond described this zine as being somewhat unique. I won't argue with that. The strip is a rambling narrative concerning a number of different characters leading pointless, hopeless, wretched lives in the city. There's sex, kidnaping, murder, the crucifiction of a bizarre priest who attempted sodomy on a gang member, girls have the names of their boyfriends tatooed on their breasts, a guy run over while he's stuck in a manhole, people spitting up, and a baseball player whisked off to heaven while having dinner at a French restaurant. That's what the strip is about. It's a series of incidents often totally unrelated, the story jumping from one to the other without preamble. Everything is full of gloom and despair. If Carl Macek wants to find Film Noir in comics he need look no further than here. The art is often crude and yet is sometimes effective. The long shots of the city, the scenes of people running and fighting are effective. I really don't know what to make of this. I really can't tie it to anything and say, "It's sort of similar to this," because it is unique. I'm not sure it's really all that successful but it isn't a complete failure either. It's damned unusual and it does have its moments.

The remainder of the book is a series of unconnected one page illustrations in much the same vein as that used in the strip. There's things like an organ grinder with a midget woman on a chain, women in stripped dresses graduating from reform school, a man holding a gun to the head of a hostage child, a man shining a flashlight on a body while in the background spotlights illuminate the silhouettes of more bodies floating into the sky, a priest about to be electrocuted and many others.

Yeah, I'd say it's somewhat unique.

RATING 5 / JAMES VAN HISE

THE COMIC READER #166, March 1979 - $1.00 - 64 pages - Published by Street Enterprises, P.O. Box 255, Menomonee Falls, Wisc. 53051. Published monthly.

THE COMICS JOURNAL #45, March 1979 - $1.25 - 68 pages - Published by Fantagraphics, Inc., 938 Stillwater Road, Stamford, Conn. 06902. Published monthly.

Frankly, I dislike reviews. Whenever I encounter them in fannish literature I rapidly get bored and begin to flip the pages to more interesting topics. Perhaps this is because few fans are capable of writing an interesting or informative review; perhaps this is because there is rather little in fandom which merits reviewing. Generally, a reviewer has the reviewee at his mercy, and the power and ego tripping that goes on puts me off. Finally, a review is derivative--it is writing about somebody else's material. I cannot deny that it is possible that a good, creative reviewer might add something of substance to a work under review, but usually that does not happen. In those cases where it does, the reviewer would have been far better advised to use his creative energy for his own ends, rather than waste it reviewing the works of others.

In fandom, reviews are a dime a dozen, and most fannish reviews are worth even less. Take a fan, give him a comic book or a fanzine and a pen, sit him down, and presto, a few minutes later a review appears. The process is akin to chaining trained chimpanzees to typewriters and hoping for the complete works of William Shakespeare; the result is much the same.

So why am I here? Let's just say I'm doing a favor for a friend, and let it go at that. I've been asked to review the current issues of THE COMIC READER and THE COMICS JOURNAL; by reviewing both items in one column I save myself the chore of having to write two reviews (although this one may become twice as long), plus I get to throw in some invidious comparisons when the situation warrants it. I'll call the issues in this review TCR and TCJ for short, in the typically fannish fashion of acronym-building.

I) PRODUCTION AND FORMAT

Both magazines are neck-in-neck in terms of visible production quality. TCR is 7" X 10" and 64 pages, mainly black and white on newsprint, with a color cover and some colored interior pages on a better grade of white paper. It costs a buck. TCJ is 8¼"X 11" and 68 pages, all black and white interiors on newsprint, with a glossy stock cover. The front cover alone is in color. It costs $1.25. In terms of the amount of paper used,

TCR is slightly the better deal--it's almost as big as TCJ but costs 20% less, and you get more color.

The color work in TCR is superior to that of TCJ. Whoever does the overlays for TCR understands tone and texture better. The colorist on TCJ seems to have forgotten that blue and yellow mix to give green, red and yellow mix to give orange, and red and blue give violet. Why am I harping on color so much? Because color gives an extra dimension of depth to a picture or a printed page. Color conveys information which is simply unavailable in black and white. Our eyes are physiologically built to distinguish a multitude of colors, and this talent should be used. It gladdens my heart when fans can afford to put color into their publications, but it saddens me when the coloring seems unworthy of the money spent.

TCR is the third issue in their new, large format, which is a welcome change from those earlier issues in that pesky small size which made them impossible to stack together with other publications. Back issues of TCR still clutter my shelves like ants, and they were difficult to read because of the small print. Small type on newsprint is really hard on the eyes--a compelling reason to avoid reading a magazine. With the larger format, TCR has been able to expand its type size to the point where you don't risk myopia while reading.

On the other hand, TCJ, although a larger-size magazine, in most places sports a smaller size type than TCR. Consequently, it is as hard to read as TCR used to be. However, smaller type does allow them to jam a lot of copy into the magazine.

Neither magazine is typeset, which is an obvious advantage when one is trying to maintain a monthly schedule and keep one's costs down. But having typewritten text renders the small type size in TCJ even more irritating.

The ratio of advertising pages to total page count is about 11/64 in TCR, and about 19/68 in TCJ; there are thus somewhat less than twice as many ad pages in TCJ as in TCR. It is difficult to call either magazine an adzine. Multiplying ad pages by page rates gives an approximate total ad budget of $450 for TCR and $1000 for TCJ (exact figures could be computed at some labor, but these estimates are sufficient). Given the higher total ad budget, the touted higher circulation, and the higher cover price for TCJ, I would have expected a lot better-looking book than TCR.

II) CONTENT

I find TCR to be an indispensable scorecard of the current month's comics. The cover artist information is certainly appreciated, and I use it in my own research. On those occasions when issues of TCR have been late or absent, it takes considerable effort to determine just what comics are due and when they may be expected. It is extremely useful to have advance warning of cancellations and new titles, as there is simply no other way one can know when these events occur. Unfortunately, TCR is not perfect by any means (they picked up SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP #15 months after it had made its fleeting appearance on the stands), but it is as good a guide to what is new as can be provided under the constraints of their publishing schedule. Its primary purpose is to be the "TV Guide of comic fandom," and it is doing its job well.

Almost half of TCR is devoted to being an extension of Street Enterprises' former publication, THE MENOMONEE FALLS GAZETTE. That was an attempt to circumvent the stranglehold the newspaper syndicates have over what newspaper strips are printed where on this continent. Unfortunately, it was ultimately killed by the syndicates although very indirectly because they were not allowed to carry some of the best and most interesting strips. As a result, they lost their readership (I know that's why they lost mine, for example); their circulation did not grow, which resulted in economic problems, which resulted in delays, which resulted in an even lower circulation, and so forth. Having a good-selling book in TCR, they are attempting to let it carry whatever it can of the strips that were once featured in the GAZETTE. Although their continuing efforts to publish quality newspaper strips on a regular basis are laudable, it is difficult to see how they could possibly keep up with anything like all the strips that were featured in the GAZETTE each week on a monthly basis. They are doomed to fall farther and farther behind; it would be better if they devoted their extra space to something more interesting rather than filling it with newspaper strip reprints which are, as of this writing, many months old.

It is far less obvious exactly what the purpose of TCJ is, but it must have one if there are 10,000 fans who buy it regularly. (Incidentally, I would take issue with this circulation figure--most likely it stands for the number of copies sold to distributors and is only distantly related to the number of persons who actually buy the magazine on the stands.) It does carry news of coming events in comic publishing, and it is good to have a source other than TCR from which one can determine what is new, if only for the different slant. But most of the magazine is devoted to reviews of comics and related publications, and since I find such material specious (see the opening paragraph), TCJ does little for me. Other people might be more interested. The best part of TCJ is the interview with Joe Staton, which is quite interesting and informative, and the columns by Dwight Decker, who is one of the best writers in comic fandom--and proves it by making his review of the Superman movie interesting and informative. Bill Mantlo's column on the racist propaganda comics of Angola is also worth reading, though it could have been better organized. I found Don Rosa's art on "Tagdenah" unsuitable to the strip, which was eerily incomprehensible. Don's artwork comes through best when he works with his own material.

Past issues of THE COMICS JOURNAL have been noteworthy for the presence of reviews by Marilyn Bethke, which have been almost universally negative in tone, frequently strident and occasionally verging on slander. The current TCJ, amazingly enough, carries an upbeat Bethke review (and two of the more usual downbeat variety). It also carries a fistful of other (mainly downbeat) reviews. In no case was I able to get beyond the first two paragraphs of any review, save the one by Dwight Decker (as noted in an earlier paragraph); the ennui was too much for me.

I can see no useful purpose to be served by repeatedly pointing out the obvious shortcomings of comics and rubbing everybody's faces in them. Comic books are not literature and do not pretend to be anything but juvenile escapist ephemera. It is pointless to review them on any other basis. After reading TCJ, I got the impression that the writers really, deep down inside, dislike comics. My advice to the publishers of TCJ would be to stop publishing the magazine and start trying to publish better comics, whatever they may be. Writing and publishing scurrilously negative reviews is a cheap way of getting attention; writing and publishing comic books on a literary level equal to that of mainstream literature is so difficult it has not yet been done. Why not show the rest of the world something really constructive and interesting, if you can?

III) SUMMARY

I find TCR consistently useful to anybody who follows comics regularly, as well-produced as its budget and schedule will allow, and in general a fanzine worthy of its high circulation. RATING 9 (it's not quite perfect).

I find TCJ's reviews boring and pretentious, generally not worth reading except for the columns by Dwight Decker. Although it has a higher operating budget than TCR, they seem to do less with the money. If TCR were to fold, I would certainly be concerned; if TCJ were to fold, I would not miss it. RATING 5 (would be "4", but saved by Dwight Decker's writing).

--GEORGE OLSHEVSKY

This installment of I.C. is dedicated to the memory of actor TED CASSIDY who died on Jan. 16, 1979 at the age of 46. His characterizations of "Ruk" on the "What Are Little Girls Made Of" segment of STAR TREK, and "Lurch" on THE ADDAMS FAMILY will insure that he will never be forgotten by fandom.

I was asked about postage stamps commemorating cartoonists or comic characters. I seemed to be correct in saying that, if one considers Walt Disney a cartoonist, his U.S.A. and San Marino issues are the only such stamps. I also finally found the elusive set of 10 San Marino stamps, one with Walt, and nine others featuring Disney characters. They include Mickey, Minnie, Black Pete, Goofy, Pluto, Donald, $crooge, H.D.&L., and (most interestingly) Gyro Gearloose! I mean, how many of the general populace know who Gyro Gearloose is? Along with the $crooge stamp, ($crooge is not that well-known either) these stamps are quite a tribute to Unca' Carl, if indirectly. Anyone interested might still be able to buy a mint set of these 10 San Marino stamps from the Kenmore Stamp Company, Milford, N.H. 03055; Write and inquire about their availability and price, but they set me back about $18.

SHIRLEY MEECH knows of a few things by Ron Goulart which I missed: MARVEL PREVIEW #16 (article), CRAZY in 1958-59, and the "Elroy Opper, High School Boy" texts in Dell's PONYTAIL comics about ten years ago.

COMIC BOOK HALL of FAME

First off, I'd like to again point out that the purpose of this section is to nominate single issues of a comic title so many readers who want to name stuff like "all the Warlock stories by Starlin" or "anything by Ditko" are missing the point of this particular "Hall of Fame". (This applies to the "TV Hall of Fame" as well.)

ALAN SHUBERT nominates D.C.'s THE SHADOW #2, and the Manhunter strip "Resurrection of Paul Kirk" in DETECTIVE #439.

MIKE BARSON sends a list of his favorites for us to reread: STRANGE TALES #157, DONALD DUCK/FOUR COLOR #189 & 408, GREEN LANTERN #89, CONAN #19,20,24, POGO PARADE, AVENGERS ANNUAL #7, SPIDER-MAN #4, 9-15 (easy, now) and annual #2 (a popular issue), TERRY & THE PIRATES/FOUR COLOR #9 (1st series), TUROK #7, and UNCLE $CROOGE #16!

VERNON CLARK picks these goodies: TARZAN #166-167 ("Tarzan The Terrible"), KULL #2 & #8, SPIDER-MAN #14 & 17 (Green Goblin) and STRANGE TALES #119.

WILLIAM PEEL pulls a quick one with us and nominates some hard-to-get items in MASTER #27,28,30,33 and 34 (Capt. Marvel Jr.), also SHAZAM #34.

Oh, Happy Day! STEVE PARYS nominates what I considered to be the most unique and entertaining comic story in years: "The Last Bounty Hunter" in the JONAH HEX SPECTACULAR/DC SPECIAL SERIES #16; also DAREDEVIL #158.

WAYNE SMITH liked AVENGERS #63-65, and #100, X-MEN #100, and TOMB OF DRACULA #25.

* * *

ROD SMITH--FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY
---WHAT COMIC BOOK COMPANY FIRST PUT THE NAMES OF THE ARTISTS, WRITERS, ETC. IN THE FRONTS OF THEIR BOOKS, AND WHEN???

You mean in the extensive manner that Marvel originated giving everyone credit right down to the letterer? Interesting question! Since the thirties, many comic book features carried by-lines, sometimes for the artist, sometimes for the writer. Nearly everything put out by Marvel/Atlas from the late 40's to the early 60's carried the by-line "By Stan Lee", not specifying Lee's end of the product. (This originated when Stan Lee wanted to join the National Cartoonists Society, even though he wasn't a cartoonist! He almost hoodwinked them, but not quite.) Also, the covers of many newspaper reprint comics carried artist credits, but we'll only consider stuff done just for the comic books. I think some of the earliest cover featured craftsman's credits were for Simon and Kirby or Siegel and Shuster (on "Funnyman") in the late forties. E.C. always made sure the readers knew who drew each story, but I don't think an issue was often made as to who did the writing. D.C. gave artist/writer credits in early STRANGE ADVENTURES and MYSTERY IN SPACE in the early fifties. So I'd guess that Marvel did originate the custom of giving full credits to all contributors on comic stories back in 1962, one of their greatest contributions to funnybook history.

* * *

JOHN PIERCE--COLUMBUS, OHIO

---WHAT WAS KURT SCHAFFENBERGER'S FIRST PUBLISHED D.C. STORY???

When Fawcett comics folded, Otto Binder, the head writer, moved right over and became the head writer on the Superman family stories. He recommended Kurt when the new LOIS LANE comic was proposed in 1957, and as I understand it, Kurt's first DC work was in that LOIS LANE #1. Does anyone have a Schaffenberger index for us?

Mr. Pierce also asks me some questions on western comics which I'll need help with: Who drew Bob Colt for Fawcett?, who wrote/drew Tex Granger comics?, same for ROCKY LANE comics, and what was the name of Buffalo Bill's Indian sidekick in the Fred Meagher strip?

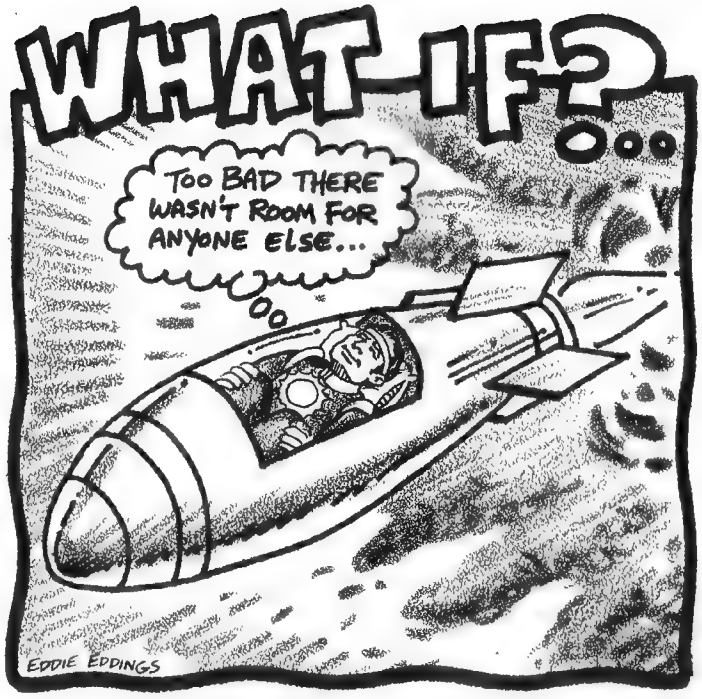
* * *

JOHN PETER D'AMANDA JR.--MIAMI SPRINGS, FLORIDA
---CAN YOU LIST THE ENTIRE GROUP OF DC CHARACTERS WHO ARE IN ANY WAY RELATED TO SUPERMAN???

I've given this some thought, but I can't come up with too much other than the obvious. We have Jor-el (father), Lara (mother), Kara (Supergirl)(cousin), Kara's father and mother Zor-el and Alura (uncle and aunt). Seems as though in Kandor there's a double for Superman and member of the "Superman look-alike Squad" named Don-el who is some distant cousin or such. Kal-el comes from the distinguished House of El family and had a number of famous ancestors such as explorer Val-el, inventor Sul-el, politician Tala-el, scientist Hatu-el, and architect Gam-el (who is perhaps an ancestor of one of our illustrious RBCC artists). But I assume we're not going to get into the Kent family as well, right? There's the imaginary story where Lex Luthor became Superman's father, but we'll let this dog lie as well.

---WHAT IS THE EXPLANATION OF THE SUPER-BEINGS' SUPERVISIONS???

Kryptonian super-beings, right? I'd be more curious about their powers of flight. But Kryptonian super-folks have X-ray vision, telescopic vision, microscopic vision, infrared vision, photographic vision (or photographic memory) and "super vision", a combination of any or all, by which Superman might peer into a dark sealed vault a thousand miles away at a grain of dust--and not forget a bit of it! As for how they do it all -- uh...radiation from a yellow sun! How's that? Prove me wrong, I defy you!



---EXACTLY WHY DID KRYPTON EXPLODE? I'VE HEARD CONFLICTING STORIES OF EVERYTHING FROM KRYPTON-QUAKES TO A SUPERNOVA OF THE RED GIANT IT ORBITED.

Details vary depending on which scriptor is writing a particular story, but Krypton had an unstable core of Uranium which had built up to atomic pressure for eons until it finally exploded in that titanic blast. (That story in SUPERMAN #205 about Krypton being destroyed by some Marvel-style space villain was poppycock!) Of course, Krypton-quakes heralded the explosion's approach. In the movie, it seemed to be a supernovae as you say...but that was just in the movie.

* * *

EDDIE EDDINGS--HOUSTON, TEXAS
---IN WHAT ISSUE OF SUPERMAN OR ACTION (HELL, I DON'T KNOW) WAS THE APRIL FOOL MISTAKE STORY? I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT BEFORE BREAKFAST!

This card from the Big E. was dated January, so I'm afraid he's missed a few Egg McMuffins. But "The Great Boo Boo Contest", a.k.a. "The Night of March 31st", was in SUPERMAN #145, May 1961, and a choice bit of whimsey it was. This was a short Superman story which was a rahthah droll find-the-errors game (There were about 425 altogether, according to the winning entries). There was a follow-up game in SUPERMAN #169 which was also a botch-up. "The Great D.C. Contest" had, as its point, to find a single "D" or "C" in the entire story. It was intended to have been the "Continued after the next page" line hiding innocently at the bottom of one page...but somebody failed to proofread a panel where two other "D"s appeared.

I just reread that "Boo Boo Contest"; I never noticed it before, but in one panel two men are calmly watching Clark switch to Superman in his storeroom--I think the two men are the artists Swan and Klein, or perhaps Swan and editor Weisinger?

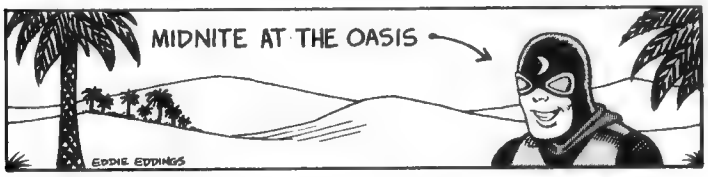
* * *

MIKE VALERIO--SEEKONK, MASSACHUSETTS
---A FEW YEARS BACK, GLENN FORD STARRED IN A T.V. MOVIE AS A PRIVATE-EYE CALLED "JARRETT". I'M TOLD THE HEAVY IN THE SHOW WAS A GUY WHO COLLECTED COMIC BOOKS. THE PLOT REVOLVED AROUND THIS GUY STEALING VALUABLE COMICS AND THEN DESTROYING THEM TO MAKE THE VALUE OF HIS OWN COLLECTION GO UP. COULD YOU GIVE ME MORE INFO ON THIS???

I guess we can let this slip into the comics section. Yes, the villain was an eccentric played by Anthony Quayle in this 1973 movie. Actually, as I recall, the plot did not revolve around the comic book collecting; that was just one part of Quayle's character. And yes, this maniac constantly bought duplicates of comics and fed them through a shredder in order to make his private collection increase in value. (Of course, thank God this is silly; The only way this would work out is if, for each comic bought and destroyed, all remaining copies would have to well more than double in price or it's a losing proposition. I'd think to make one comic increase just a bit in price, Quayle would have to spend hundreds or thousands of times his possible profit margin! Still, I'm almost sorry you brought it up! The group that has finally gained control of prices of rare comics are only interested in their investments and getting their possessions to appreciate in value, and had this question appeared in TBG, you can bet that there'd be a good number of my friends, the speculators, trying to figger if there was a way to make this scheme work. Yeah, I know, sour grapes, sour grapes! Brother, it's later than you think!

Oh...er...anyway, I recall the movie's big fight climax took place in Quayle's comic vault, tumbling his collections and smashing large glass plaques of DC heroes. The funny thing is that I can't find a listing for this TV movie in any of the reference sources that I'd expect to see it, as if it were never put into syndication; possibly, DC objected to the use of its heroes? I dunno'. But without even a specific date, I can't even look it up in TV GUIDE to get more data.

* * *



IRA BRAD MATETSKY--BALDWIN, NEW YORK
---COULD I HAVE A CHARACTER/APPEARANCE INDEX FOR "ALL AMERICAN COMICS"???

Sure, I'll just get out my copy of HOWARD KELTNER'S INDEX TO GOLDEN AGE COMIC BOOKS which gives very detailed character indexes for over 180 "Golden Age" titles. I highly recommend it if you're after this sort of data. Just contact Jerry Bails, who has an ad in this very RBCC!

ALL-AMERICAN COMICS #1-102

DR. MID-NITE: #25-102, MUTT & JEFF: #1-101, HOP HARRIGAN: #1-99, RED, WHITE & BLUE: #1-69,71, SCRIBBLY: #1-59 (with Red Tornado: #23-59), ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN/ RESCUE ON MARS: #1-18,20-25, BEN WEBSTER: #1-24, DAISYBELLE: #1-14,16-23, TIPPIE: #1-15, REG'LAR FELLARS: #1-7, 10-15, WILEY OF WEST POINT: #1-12, TOONERVILLE FOLKS: #1-12, ALWAYS BELITTLIN': #1-12, SKIPPY: #1-12, BOBBY THATCHER: #1-7, SPOT SAVAGE: #1-6, BELIEVE IT OR NOT: #2-18, 21-24, THE AMERICAN WAY: #5-10, GARY CONCORD, ULTRA MAN: #8-19, THE GREEN LANTERN: #16-102, SARGON THE SORCERER: #26-50,70, BIBLE STORIES: #47, AMERICAN HISTORY STORIES: #62-67, THE BLACK PIRATE: #72,73,83-102, WINKY, BLINKY & NODDY: #73-82, FONEY FAIRY TALES: #82, COTTON-TOP KATIE: #89,91-97, EVERYTHING HAPPENS TO HARRY: #101, JOHNNY THUNDER (cowboy): #100-102 THE ATOM: #19-46,48-61,70-72

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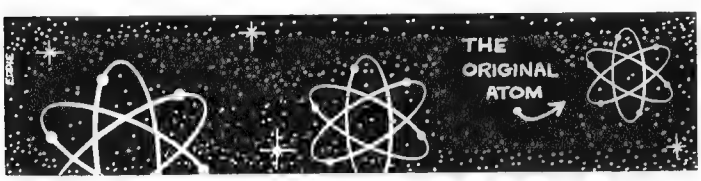


RICHARD PINI--"WARP GRAPHICS", TAUNTON, MASSACHUSETTS
---I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT ISSUE OF SUPERMAN OR ACTION OR SUCH AROUND 1972 FEATURED THIS STORY I'M TRYING TO TRACK DOWN, SO I FIGURED I'D BOTHER POOR ROSA. TITLE STORY CONCERNED A COUPLE OF BADDIES CALLED THE DYNAMITE DUO WHO HID A BOMB SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY AND SUPES EVENTUALLY HAD TO GO TO SOMEPLACE CALLED "SCIENCE CITY" TO A PLANETARIUM WHERE HE FOUND A CLUE TO THE BOMB'S LOCATION IN THE "AURIGA THE CHARIOTEER" CONSTELLATION.

Richard, who helps bring us "ELFQUEST", works in a planetarium, and is fond of comics concerning such celestial emporiums. Hopefully, some elf fans will help locate this issue. (?)

* * *

CHARLES LAWRENCE--FALKLAND, NORTH CAROLINA
---WHAT FEATURES APPEARED IN THE FOLLOWING COMIC BOOKS: NEW COMICS #1-11, NEW FUN COMICS #1-7, THE COMICS #1-3, BIG BOOK OF FUN COMICS #1 AND NEW BOOK OF COMICS #1,2???

I don't know. Weren't all those titles eventually consolidated under the title "THE BIG, NEW BOOK OF NEW, FUN COMICS"? . . . I didn't think so.

* * *

RICHARD CENTOLA--BARRINGTON, NEW JERSEY
---IN WHAT ISSUE OF "BLACKHAWK" WAS LADY BLACKHAWK CHANGED TO QUEEN KILLER SHARK AND WHAT ISSUE DID SHE RESUME BEING LADY BLACKHAWK???

Zenda, Lady Blackhawk, changed to Queen Killer Shark in BLACKHAWK #200. She appeared as Killer Shark's female counterpart again in #204, 216, & 225, but finally regained her identity (by the customary blow-to-the-head) in BLACKHAWK #228, the first issue of the "new look" BLACKHAWK.

---HOW WAS A"SUPERMEN OF AMERICA" MESSAGE DECODED???

Easy! I used ta' decode those and I never joined the club. The messages were always labeled as "Saturn 5" or "Jupiter 8" or "Krypton 3" or like dat. Well,the first part, the planet name, meant zilch. All you had to do was offset the alphabet by counting ahead (or was it backwards?) by the numerical value on the code. F'rinstance, for the "Saturn 5" code, chuck the "Saturn" part and transpose the entire alphabet back 5 spaces. . . like an "F" in the code would actually be an "A" which appears 5 letters ahead of "F" in the alphabet. After all the work, the messages weren't worth decoding since they only said stuff like "Cleanliness is next to godliness" or some other namby-pamby claptrap. But later on the messages told of upcoming events in the Superman family magazines and were much more interesting.

---ARE THE CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED PUBLISHERS STILL IN BUSINESS???

No...they stopped producing new material in the mid-sixties and ceased reprinting around 1972. I seem to recall that they managed to get associated press coverage of their closing-up shop and it was this publicity that brought the CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED's into the collectors' item market. Prior to this, they sold for 50¢ each in mint...now several go for as much as several hundred bucks.

* * *

---WHAT MOVIES OR TELEVISION SHOWS USING COMIC CHARACTERS HAVE BEEN MOST FAITHFUL TO THE ORIGINAL SOURCE???

Gosh...how many live-action abortions, excuse me, adaptations of comics strips can I come up with? There were movie versions of Superman, Batman, Capt. America, Blackhawk, Congo Bill, Vigilanti, Capt. Marvel, Spy Smasher from comic books, and from newspaper strips films of Dick Tracy, Blondie, Flash Gordon, Buck Rogers, Brick Bradford, the Phantom, Prince Valiant, Gasoline Alley, Little Orphan Annie, Lil' Abner, Tillie the

Toiler, Jungle Jim, Joe Palooka, Bringing Up Father, the Gumps, Ella Cinders, King of the Royal Mounted, Nyoka, Roy Powers, Modesty Blaise, Barbarella, Tailspin Tommy, Mandrake, Red Ryder, Up Front, Skippy, and TV versions of Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Hulk, Spider-Man, Capt. America, Capt. Marvel, Mandrake, Dr. Strange, Blondie, Archie, Sheena, Flash Gordon, Addams Family, Dennis the Menace, Terry and the Pirates, Steve Canyon, Hazel, Joe Palooka...is that it? (Note I'm avoiding movies and TV series based on radio series which also happened to be comic strips, since these were adaptations of the radio show, not the strips; examples: Lone Ranger, Green Hornet, etc. and I'm also avoiding animated adaptations of anything.

But - to the original question! Many of the items on my lists I've never seen, such as some of the old serials, but I think it's safe to say they probably weren't very faithful, based on ones like Capt. America which had virtually nothing in common with the strip. Of the stuff I'm familiar with, many were good but few were faithful to the original...with good reason. I'm of the school of thought that what works in a comic won't always work in live film. Serious super-hero strips are good, but I simply can't picture a completely straight live version of such a silly idea as a super-powered being!

Let's see: on TV, SUPERMAN was good, but not too faithful. BATMAN was enjoyable, but not at all faithful. When I saw the WONDER WOMAN TV movie with Lynda Carter, I was convinced that it was the perfect comic-strip super-hero adaptation: it was humorous but not farcical and it captured the spirit of the super-hero. In movies, PRINCE VALIANT was quite good, although it took some liberties. FLASH GORDON was enjoyable; but I'll jump on the wagon and say that, despite a bit of uneveness and a very few irritating deviations from the original, easily the best live-action adaptation of a super-hero comic is, of course, SUPERMAN (1978)!

* * *

DOUG ADAMS--LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY
---WHICH ISSUES OF BOYS' LIFE HAD WORK BY NEAL ADAMS?

Both of the Neal Adams' indexes which have been published list the exact same things and say it was all advertising material. From May, 1960 to January, 1966, Neal did between 60 and 70 pages of advertising material for BOYS' LIFE. For instance: GOODYEAR TIRES "Adventures of Flash Farrell" (5 of them), BELL TELEPHONE "Chip Martin, College Reporter" (from 12 to 15), SAVAGE RIFLES "Dave and His Dad" (5), and SAVAGE RIFLES "A Medal for Greg". One specific I can list is "Fish Prints" (½ page) in the April 1962 issue of BOYS LIFE. How's dat?

* * *

TELEVISION

Recently I brought up the matter of the excellent current series LOU GRANT and how unique it is to see a character from a cancelled series go on to star in a new, different series. I might now bring up the matter of how LOU GRANT seems to be getting too self-conscious about its topical, philosophical subplots and seems to be losing its subtlety in getting on its soapbox...but also I'd like to mention the unsigned note I received reminding me of BOURBON STREET BEAT and how the late Richard Long continued his "Rex Randolph" character on to 77 SUNSET STRIP and Van Williams took his "Kenny Madison" on to SURFSIDE SIX. There always was so much delightful incest among Warner Bros. TV series!

TV HALL OF FAME!

WAYNE WALLS nominates two shows I'll second: BATTLESTAR GALACTICA's "The Living Legend" (it's rare that I get caught up in the excitement as much as I did on that episode), plus the TV movie FIRE IN THE SKY about the comet hitting Phoenix. An interesting sidelight on that'n is that one noticed that though the entire city of Phoenix, including many residents, was obliterated, no deaths or injuries were actually shown on screen (with the possible exception of one nurse passing through a plate-glass window), and yet the show was exciting. I'm afraid that Wayne has tipped off burglars to the fact he owns a VCR, though, since these two shows ran concurrently.

WILLIAM PEEL, apparently some relation to Emma, nominates these AVENGERS episodes: "Castle De'Ath", "Honey For The Prince", and "The House That Jack Built", and these NEW AVENGERS: "Complex", "Sleeper" and "The Midas Touch".

I'd like to nominate a 1976 TV movie I just recently saw: "One of my wives is missing"! I've never seen so many surprise plot twists! It had me bouncing off the walls! Actually, the final twist was a bit much...but whew!

* * *

JOSEPH PILLA--LEXINGTON KENTUCKY
---WHAT TV SHOWS HAS JOHN FRANKENHEIMER DIRECTED???
HIS FILMS NUMBER AMONG MY FAVORITES.

Uh. . . I don't have any data on his TV work (or any director/producer's TV stuff) but while we're here,

Lemmee' do a Frankenheimer movie list: THE YOUNG STRANGER ('57), THE YOUNG SAVAGES ('61), ALL FALL DOWN ('61), THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE! ('62), THE BIRDMAN OF ALCATRAZ ('62), SEVEN DAYS IN MAY! ('64), THE TRAIN ('64), SECONDS ('66), GRAND PRIX ('67), THE EXTRAORDINARY SEAMAN ('68), THE FIXER ('68), THE GYPSY MOTHS ('69), I WALK THE LINE ('70), THE HORSEMEN ('71), IMPOSSIBLE OBJECT ('73), THE ICEMAN COMETH ('73), 99 44/100 DEAD ('74), FRENCH CONNECTION II ('75), BLACK SUNDAY! ('76)

* * *

ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS
Third Season - Part 2
"Based on data submitted by Bob Reed"
Still at 9:30-10:00 Sundays on CBS!

#91 - Jan. 5, 1958 - "THE PERCENTAGE"
A gangster, plagued by memories of his cowardice during the Korean War, is afraid another veteran will tell the newspapers of his behavior. He tries to buy the veteran off.
Cast--Alex Nichol, Carole Mathews, Donald Keefer

#92 - Jan. 12, 1958 - "TOGETHER"
On Christmas Eve, a businessman and his secretary are having a drink to celebrate the season. The girl, demanding that her employer give up his wife, decides to call the wife.
Cast--Joseph Cotten

#93 - Jan. 19, 1958 - "SYLVIA"
On an ocean voyage, a woman meets a handsome man and marries him after a whirlwind romance despite her father's warnings. After a few months of marriage, the woman's husband deserts her and she decides to find him and exact revenge.
Cast--Ann Todd, John McIntire, Philip Reed

#94 - Jan. 26, 1958 - "THE MOTIVE"
Tommy Greer believes that the reason murderers are caught is that they kill with a definite motive. If no motive can be established, the killer will not be caught. His friend goes to the phone book and selects a name at random suggesting he prove his theory.
Cast--Skip Homeier, William Redfield, Carmen Phillips

#95 - Feb. 2, 1958 - "MISS BRACEGIRDLE DOES HER DUTY"
Millicent Bracegirdle announces courageously to her tea drinking circle that she intends to travel alone all the way from Easingstoke, England to Paris to meet her sister. But at Bordeaux, on her first night away from home, she has a startling encounter.
Cast--Mildred Natwick as Millicent Bracegirdle.

#96 - Feb. 9, 1958 - "THE EQUALIZER"
A small man plots revenge against the big man who stole his wife.
Cast--Leif Erickson

#97 - Feb. 16, 1958 - "ON THE NOSE"
Fran, a Manhattan housewife, loves to gamble, but it's a habit she is desperately trying to break. Her husband threatens to leave her if she continues. Fran's fears are heightened when her bookie threatens to collect her debt.
Cast--Jan Sterling

#98 - Feb. 23, 1958 - "GUEST FOR BREAKFAST"
Eve and Jordan Ross, a young married couple, have just said goodbye to their evening guests when they receive a visit from a stranger. The stranger turns out to be a man wanted for double murder.
Paul Henreid directed this episode.
Cast--Scott McKay, Joan Tetzel, Richard Sheppard

#99 - March 2, 1958 - "RETURN OF THE HERO"
Andre and Marcel, veterans of the French conflict in Algeria, are released from a French Army hospital. Andre is to return home where his family are sweetheart are waiting for him, but he finds it difficult to leave the girl who befriended him while he was convalescing.
Cast--Jacques Bergerac, Susan Kohner

#100 - March 9, 1958 - "THE RIGHT KIND OF HOUSE"
Eccentric Sadie Grimes insists that her real estate agent offer her run down house for sale at a fantastically high price. But a prosperous looking gentleman agree to pay the outrageous sum.
Cast--Jeannette Nolan, Harry Tyler, Robert Emhardt

#101 - March 16, 1958 - "FOGHORN"
During the 1800's, a San Francisco belle announces her engagement to a wealthy bachelor. At the engagement party she meets and falls in love with a stranger named Allen.
Cast--Barbara Bel Geddes, MICHAEL RENNIE

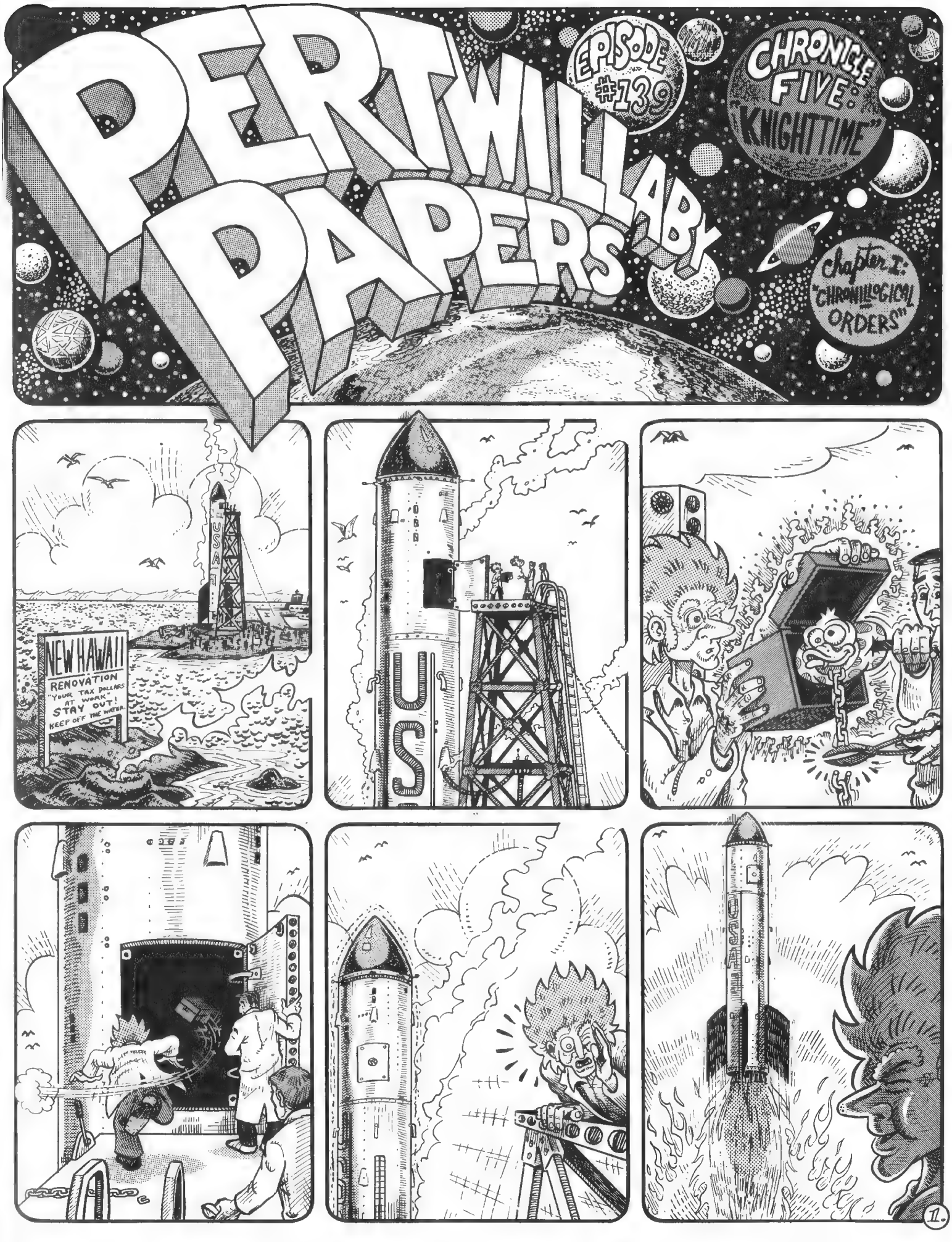
#102 - March 23, 1958 - "FLIGHT TO THE EAST"
While on a flight from Nairobi to Cairo, foreign correspondent Ted Franklin becomes acquainted with a very attractive blonde. He is surprised at her interest in his recent articles covering the trial and eventual hanging of an arab leader.
Cast--Gary Merrill

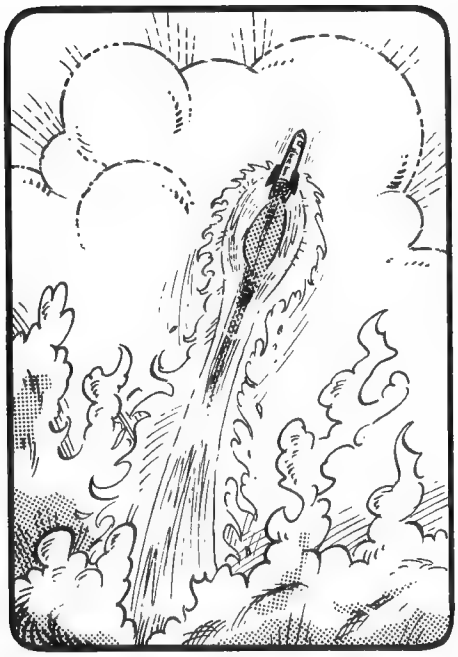
#103 - March 30, 1958 - "BULL IN A CHINA SHOP"
Four little old ladies become infatuated with their apartment house neighbor. They observe his activities with a telescope.
Cast--Estelle Winwood, Elizabeth Patterson, Ellen Corby, Ida Moore, Dennis Morgan

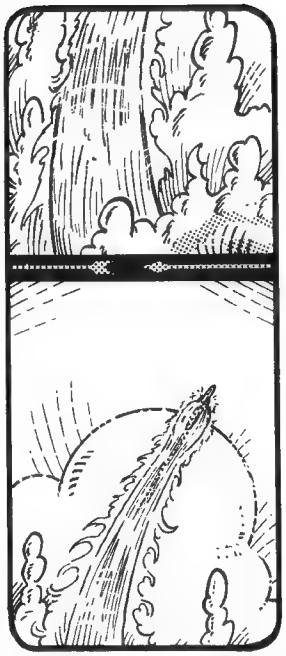
And that's where it all ends for this ish, 'til next time. So send your questions on comics, teevee, pulps, movies and stuff, including your suggestions for comic and TV indexes, as well as nominations for the Comic Book Hall of Fame and the Movie Hall of Infamy. I'd also like to hear your comments on the latest episode of PERTWILLABY PAPERS. When sending questions try to include a couple of extra stamps to help out on the research. And try to overlook those drastic fubars when writing to:

KENO DON ROSA - RBCC IC, 4012 DuPont Circle
Sherwood Apts. #401
Louisville, Kentucky 40207

Be seeing you! Don Rosa


PERTWILLABY PAPERS
EPISODE #139
CHRONICLE FIVE: "KNIGHTTIME"
Chapter I: "CHRONILLOGICAL ORDERS"
USAT
NEW HAWAII
RENOVATION
"YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK"
STAY OUT!
KEEP OFF THE WATER
U S
11.





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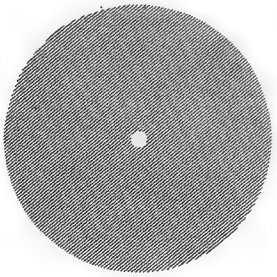
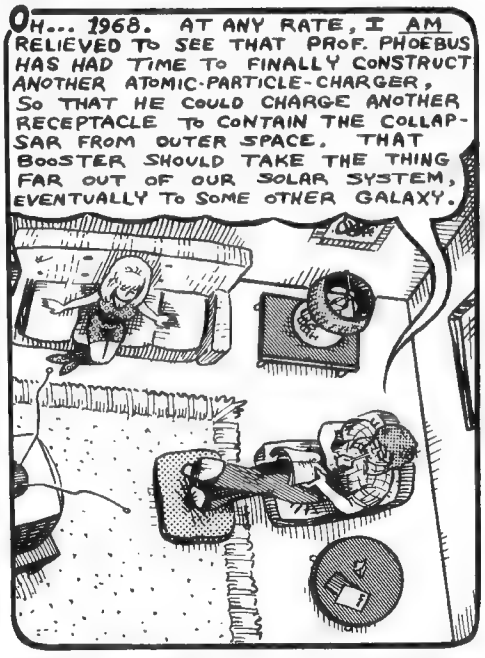


WHAT WAS THE MATTER WITH THE SOUND, LANCEY? I COULDN'T HEAR ANYTHING.

THE AUDIO WENT OUT ON THE SET, AND SINCE THERE HAS NOT BEEN MUCH WORTH WATCHING RECENTLY, I HAVE NOT AS YET BOTHERED TO REPAIR IT.
HOW LONG AGO DID IT GO OFF?


OH... 1968. AT ANY RATE, I AM RELIEVED TO SEE THAT PROF. PHOEBUS HAS HAD TIME TO FINALLY CONSTRUCT ANOTHER ATOMIC-PARTICLE-CHARGER, SO THAT HE COULD CHARGE ANOTHER RECEPTACLE TO CONTAIN THE COLLAPSAR FROM OUTER SPACE. THAT BOOSTER SHOULD TAKE THE THING FAR OUT OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM, EVENTUALLY TO SOME OTHER GALAXY.

THAT WAS QUITE AN ADVENTURE WE HAD WITH THAT BLACK HOLE LAST YEAR. I'M JUST GLAD WE DID HAVE A CHANCE TO VISIT HAWAII BEFORE IT WENT "ALOHA". ...BUT I WILL MISS McGARRETT AND DANNO.
YET THE REST OF THE PLANET ENDURES, FEATHER, LITTLE THE WORSE FOR WEAR. AND VIRTUALLY, THE SOLE REMNANT OF THE HOLE'S EARTHLY VISIT IS...

THESE LAST FEW DROPS OF OMNISOLVE™, THE ESSENCE-OF-BLACK-HOLE UNIVERSAL SOLVENT WHICH WE DISTILLED FROM OUR COLLAPSAR. SOMEDAY THIS OMNIPOTENT SUPER-ACID MAY COME IN USEFUL -- I KEEP IT IN THIS CHARGED UNBREAKABLE FLASK-PENDANT.

GOLLY, I HOPE IT CAN'T BREAK, LANCEY. YOU'D GET A CASE OF HEARTBURN FOR WHICH ROLAIDS WOULDN'T SPELL DIDDLYSQUAT.
FEATHER? WHERE DO YOU PICK UP SUCH LANGUAGE?
LOGARITHM TABLES

MY T.V. SET STILL WORKS.
ON A VASTER SCALE, THE HOLE'S PASSAGE THROUGH OUR SYSTEM MAY HAVE SLIGHTLY ALTERED THE ORBITS OF SEVERAL PLANETS. I CALCULATE THAT THE GRAND ALIGNMENT MAY NOW OCCUR SOMEWHAT SOONER THAN 1982.

THE GRAND WHICH?

THE GRAND ALIGNMENT. AN ASTRONOMICAL PHENOMENON OF... ASTRONOMICAL PROPORTIONS. ALL 9 PLANETS OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM WILL FALL INTO A NEARLY STRAIGHT LINE AT APPROXIMATELY A 60° ANGLE TO SOL. PROBABLY THE FIRST TIME SUCH A CONFIGURATION HAS OCCURRED FOR MILLIONS OF EARTH YEARS.

MILK

OH, YES, I DID HEAR A RELIGIOUS GROUP LECTURING ON THAT AT THE STUDENT CENTER. THEY SEEMED TO THINK THE GRAVITATIONAL FIELDS WOULD CAUSE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE EARTH AND THE SECOND COMING. IT WAS VERY INTERESTING -- I WAS SORRY THE LECTURE WAS CUT SHORT... IT WAS THEIR SABBATH, AND THE GROUP HAD TO GO FIND A PUMPKIN PATCH SO THEY COULD THROW OATMEAL AT THE MOON.

WHIT!

I'VE HEARD OCCULTISTS MAKE SUCH CLAIMS. THE ALIGNMENT WILL ACTUALLY HAVE NO NOTICEABLE EFFECTS ON EARTH. BUT WHATEVER THE CASE, THE INTENSE MEGA-GRAVITY OF THE BLACK HOLE HAS POSSIBLY CHANGED THE TIME OF THE ALIGNMENT.

...SOMETHING MORE INTERESTING IS THIS ARTICLE IN THE COLLEGE SCIENCE JOURNAL ABOUT PROF. HOROS KRONOS AND HIS RESEARCH. THE MAN IS GOING TO KILL SOMEONE!

GRONK.

SLURP

MILK

DOO! YO

MEANWHILE, EVEN AS I DRAW:

SKREET

SKEET SKREET

WHOMP!

BLAPPITY-BLAPPITY

((FLUB-FLOB-FLOP))

BIFF! BANG! POW!

CRUNCH! BUMP

BUMP BUMP BUMP BUMP

CRACKLE ZAP YIPE!

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

LABS LABS

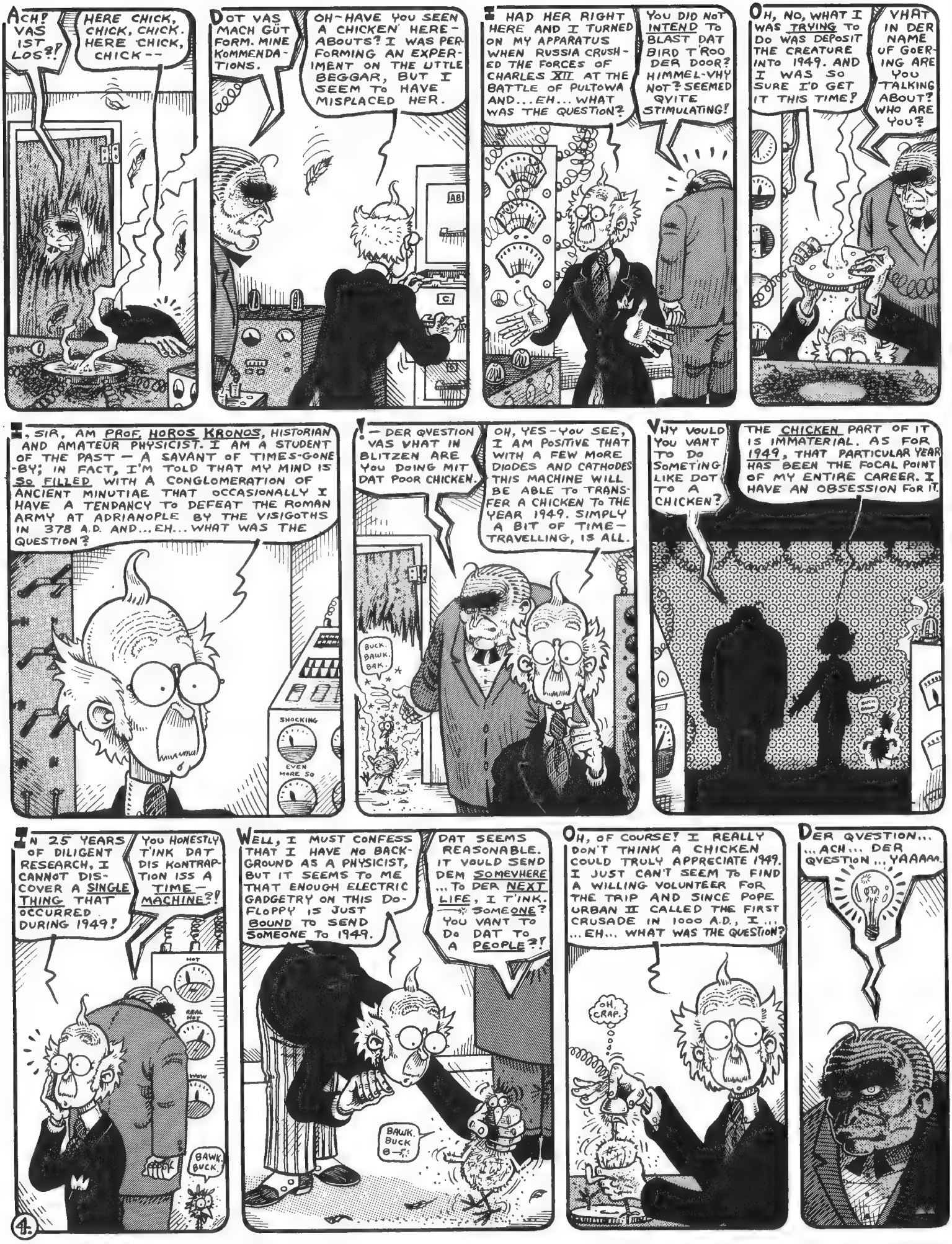
CLUCK-CLUCK-CLUCK-BA-BAWK-BUCK-BUWK-

BUCK-BUCK-BA-

BAWK!

BLAM!

SPLAT


ACH! VAS IST LOS?!
HERE CHICK, CHICK, CHICK. HERE CHICK, CHICK--
DOT VAS MACH GÜT FORM. MINE KOMMENDATIONS.
OH-HAVE YOU SEEN A CHICKEN HERE-ABOUTS? I WAS PERFORMING AN EXPERIMENT ON THE UTTLE BEGGAR, BUT I SEEM TO HAVE MISPLACED HER.
I HAD HER RIGHT HERE AND I TURNED ON MY APPARATUS WHEN RUSSIA CRUSHED THE FORCES OF CHARLES XII AT THE BATTLE OF PULTOWA AND... EH... WHAT WAS THE QUESTION?
YOU DID NOT INTEND TO BLAST DAT BIRD T'ROO DER DOOR? HIMMEL-VHY NOT? SEEMED QVITE STIMULATING!
OH, NO, WHAT I WAS TRYING TO DO WAS DEPOSIT THE CREATURE INTO 1949. AND I WAS SO SURE I'D GET IT THIS TIME!
VHAT IN DER NAME UF GOERING ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHO ARE YOU?
I, SIR, AM PROF. HOROS KRONOS, HISTORIAN AND AMATEUR PHYSICIST. I AM A STUDENT OF THE PAST - A SAVANT OF TIMES-GONE-BY; IN FACT, I'M TOLD THAT MY MIND IS SO FILLED WITH A CONGLOMERATION OF ANCIENT MINUTIAE THAT OCCASIONALLY I HAVE A TENDANCY TO DEFEAT THE ROMAN ARMY AT ADRIANOPLE BY THE VISIGOTHS IN 378 A.D. AND... EH... WHAT WAS THE QUESTION?
SHOCKING
EVEN MORE SO
I - DER QVESTION VAS VHAT IN BLITZEN ARE YOU DOING MIT DAT POOR CHICKEN.
OH, YES - YOU SEE, I AM POSITIVE THAT WITH A FEW MORE DIODES AND CATHODES THIS MACHINE WILL BE ABLE TO TRANSFER A CHICKEN TO THE YEAR 1949. SIMPLY A BIT OF TIME-TRAVELLING, IS ALL.
BUCK. BAWK. BAK.
VHY VOULD YOU VANT TO DO SOMETING LIKE DOT TO A CHICKEN?
THE CHICKEN PART OF IT IS IMMATERIAL. AS FOR 1949, THAT PARTICULAR YEAR HAS BEEN THE FOCAL POINT OF MY ENTIRE CAREER. I HAVE AN OBSESSION FOR IT.
IN 25 YEARS OF DILIGENT RESEARCH, I CANNOT DISCOVER A SINGLE THING THAT OCCURRED DURING 1949!
YOU HONESTLY T'INK DAT DIS KONTRAPTION ISS A TIME-MACHINE?!
HOT
REAL HOT
WOW
OOOK
BAWK. BUCK.
WELL, I MUST CONFESS THAT I HAVE NO BACKGROUND AS A PHYSICIST, BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THAT ENOUGH ELECTRIC GADGETRY ON THIS DOFLOPPY IS JUST BOUND TO SEND SOMEONE TO 1949.
DAT SEEMS REASONABLE. IT VOULD SEND DEM SOMEVHERE ... TO DER NEXT LIFE, I T'INK. SOMEONE? YOU VANT TO DO DAT TO A PEOPLE?!
BAWK. BUCK
OH, OF COURSE! I REALLY DON'T THINK A CHICKEN COULD TRULY APPRECIATE 1949. I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO FIND A WILLING VOLUNTEER FOR THE TRIP AND SINCE POPE URBAN II CALLED THE FIRST CRUSADE IN 1000 A.D., I ... ... EH... WHAT WAS THE QUESTION?
OH, CRAP.
OOOO
DER QVESTION... ...ACH... DER QVESTION... YAAAAA
4.

DER QVESTION VAS, VOULD YOU ALLOW ME TO BE DAT FOLUNTEER?

OH, YES, YES, WOULD YOU? I'M CERTAIN IT WILL WORK ON A HUMAN! THE PROBLEM WITH CHICKENS IS THAT THEY'RE SO SUSCEPTABLE TO DEFEAT BY THE TURKS AT THE BATTLE OF KOSSOVO IN ... EH... WHERE WAS I?

LOW HIGH

FAKE GAUGE

WHERE WAS I? OH, YES: "... THE RESEARCH VOLUNTEER, PROF. VIKTOR DIMITRIUS SMYTE OF THE NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY DEPARTMENT, HAS MADE HIMSELF AVAILABLE TO PROF. KRONOS AS A SUBJECT FOR "TIME-TRAVEL" EXPERIMENTS. DR. SMYTE HAS ALSO LOCATED FUNDS FOR PROF. KRONOS' RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY FUNDS HAVING BEEN DISCONTINUED SINCE THE FIERY LOSS OF THE NEW $15,000,000 PHYSICS LAB-ANNEX. IT IS UNKNOWN WHETHER PROF. SMYTE WILL BE SURVIVED BY ANY NEXT-OF-KIN."

WORLD GUARDIAN

"VACATIONING" SHAH SPEAKS

claims manner of departure from power synonymous with name of former country

Plans to h... self as ...

HOW EXCITING! PROF. SMYTE WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY FOR GOING BACK IN HISTORY!

HARDLY, FEATHER. LET'S GET OVER TO PROF. KRONOS' NEW LAB IMMEDIATELY!

AND WATCH PROF. KRONOS STRAP DR. SMYTE INTO HIS "TIME-TRAVEL" MACHINE? THAT'S RATHER OULISH, ISN'T IT, LANCEY? WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO SEE PROF. KRONOS?

...WHY WOULD PERTWILLABY WANT TO SEE PROF. KRONOS?

FERY SIMPLE, HERR ROATCH: PERTVILLABY ISS TOO DISGUSTINGLY NOBLE TO ALLOW ME, OR ANYVUN, TO BE A GUINEA SVINE IN SOMET'ING AS BLATANTLY PREPOSTEROUS AS "TIME TRAFEL" EXPERIMENTS, ESPECIALLY BY SUCH A RENOWN TWIT AS DIS HOROS KRONOS!

BIG FRIGGING DEAL! IF YOU WANT ME TO PAY FOR THIS COSTLY FIASCO, YOU'D BEST HAVE RESULTS IN MIND. I'M NOT INTERESTED IN MAKING PERTWILLABY LOOK LIKE A HERO, FOR CHRISSAKE!

NEIN, MINE FREUND. VE VILL MAKE HERR PERTVILLABY LOOK QVITE DER FOOL. I VILL REMAIN ADAMANT IN MINE BELIEF IN DER PROFESSOR'S THEORIES, UND PERTVILLABY VILL BE FORCED TO TAKE MINE PLACE AS DER VOLUNTEER.

AH--I BEGIN TO FOLLOW YOU? THEN WE CAN SALT THE PRESS WITH REPORTS OF THE ABSURDITY OF KRONOS' RESEARCH AND PERTWILLABY WILL BE DISGRACED! I WILL FINALLY SEE THAT HE LOSES HIS STANDING IN THE COLLEGIATE COMMUNITY--I WILL REGAIN MY POSITION AS PRIME MOVER ON THIS CAMPUS. THE ROATCH MONEY WILL AGAIN BECOME MORE POPULAR THAN PERTWILLABY'S SCATTER-BRAINED GENIUS. REVENGE!

UND MINE REFENGE VOULD BE KOMPLETE AS VELL— I VISH I KOULD AFFORD TO FINANCE DESE EXPERIMENTS MINESELF... BUT UNLIKE MANY UF MINE KOMRADS, I VAS NEFER ABLE TO GET AVAY FROM DER KAMPS MIT ALL DOSE DIAMOND RINGS UND GOLD TEETH.

HUH?

AH... DER DIAMOND RINGS UND GOLD TEETH DAT KARELESS KAMPERS VOULD LOSE ON OUR FARM VHERE I GREW UP AS AN APPLE-CHEEKED ALL-AMERIKAN BOY, IN KOUNCIL BLUFFS, IOVA, DER HEARTLAND UF—

YOU'RE SURE THAT PERTWILLABY CAN'T BE SERIOUSLY INJURED IN THESE EXPERIMENTS. I MEAN, I WANT TO DISGRACE HIM, YES, BUT PHYSICAL VIOLENCE IS OUT OF THE QUESTION.

PERTVILLABY KANNOT RECEIVE ANYT'ING MORE DAN A MILD ELEKTRIK TINGLE. TRUST ME.

HEH... JUST "MILD" ENUFF TO BLAST HIM KLEAR OUT OF DER LAB IN SEFERAL DIFFERENT DIREKTIONS.

C'MON, LANCEY! PROF. KRONOS SHOULD BE IN HIS LAB BY NOW!

WAIT FOR DODIYO, FEATHER. SHE HAS SHORT LEGS.

BLORG!

PROF. SMYTE— HERE COMES PERTWILLABY. JUST AS YOU PREDICTED!

AH... I MUST AKT SCHNELL!

DR. SMYTE... WE'RE NOT QUITE READY TO →

T'ROW DER SVITCH, PROF. KRONOS! I AM READY TO GIFF MINE ALL TO SCIENCE, EFEN IFF IT PROBABLY MEANS MINE DEATH IN DIS SEEMINGLY INSANE SUICIDE MACHINE!!!

STOP! CEASE!

HOUNK!

HOUNK! — ER— I MEAN HALT!

(THE USUAL TOKEN BORING TALK-TALK PAGE.)

PROF. SMYTE— I CAN'T LET ANYONE BE PART OF THIS NONSENSE! IT'S INCREDIBLEY DANGEROUS! WHY, SOMEONE COULD GET HIS EYE PUT OUT!

WH-WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT?!

THIS "TIME TRAVEL" CONCEPT IS STRICTLY FOR CHILDREN'S COMIC BOOKS! YOUR EXPERIMENTS CAN'T RESULT IN ANYTHING BUT ELECTROCUTION! THAT WHICH WE CALL "TIME" IS AN ABSTRACT CONCEPT WE'VE CREATED IN ORDER TO HAVE SOMETHING TO MEASURE SO THAT WE CAN RELATE WHAT HAS BEEN AND WHAT WILL BE TO WHAT IS... TO PUT THESE OTHER PARTS OF OUR LIVES OR HISTORY INTO A PERSPECTIVE WITH THE PRESENT. ...SIMPLY A CONVENIENCE. YET IT IS THE PRESENT IN WHICH EVERYTHING ACTUALLY OCCURS. SOME THINGS HAVE STOPPED OCCURRING, OTHER THINGS HAVE YET TO START OCCURRING — THAT'S THE SOLE DIFFERENCE.

THIS BIT OF MELLOWDRAMA OF ALL THESE "PASTS" AND "FUTURES" EXISTING ALL TOGETHER JUST WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO JUMP INTO THEM IS CHEAP FICTION. CONSIDER IF THERE ACTUALLY WAS THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE OF 24 HOURS AGO STILL EXISTING SOMEWHERE: THEREFORE, SO EXISTS THE UNIVERSE OF ONE HOUR AGO, AS WELL AS ONE MINUTE AGO, ONE SECOND, ONE NANOSECOND; EACH OF THESE UNIVERSES WOULD BE PERPETUALLY BECOMING THE UNIVERSE OF THE NEXT NANOSECOND. IT ALL BLENDS TOGETHER, ULTIMATELY INTO THE PRESENT, MAKING IT ALL THE SAME IN THE FIRST PLACE. AND WHICH OF THAT INFINITE NUMBER OF UNIVERSES IS ACTUALLY THE "PRESENT"? PERHAPS JUNE 29, 1913 IS THE TRUE "PRESENT" AND WE ARE PART OF A "FUTURE" UNIVERSE.

?

SPLAT!

AND "TIME-TRAVELERS" EXPECT TO MATERIALIZE IN ANOTHER "TIME", BUT OCCUPYING THE SAME SPACE FROM WHICH THEY LEFT THEIR PRESENT; HOW, THEN, WOULD THEY ACCOUNT FOR THE MOVEMENT OF THE EARTH AROUND THE SUN, THE SUN ABOUT THE GALAXY AND THE GALAXY THROUGH THE EVER-EXPANDING COSMOS? THE "TIME-TRAVELER WOULD INVARIABLY MATERIALIZE IN DEEP OUTER SPACE. PLUS, IF "TIME-TRAVEL" WERE POSSIBLE, TRAVELERS FROM THE "FUTURE" WOULD CONSTANTLY BE GOING INTO THE "PAST" AND WE WOULD ALREADY KNOW ABOUT IT SINCE IT WOULD BE PART OF HISTORY. FURTHERMORE, NOTHING WOULD INTERFERE WITH A "TIME-TRAVELER" CHANGING PAST HISTORY THROUGH ACTIONS OR SIMPLY BY BEING THERE; YET ANY TINY ALTERATION IN THE "PAST" MAY RESULT IN COMPLETELY REARRANGING THE FUTURE, TO THE POINT OF PREVENTING THE TRAVELER FROM MAKING THE VERY TRIP DURING WHICH HE CHANGED THE PAST — UNENDING PARADOXES.

PAY NO ATTENTION TO THIS GUNGE

GODDAM DODO!

LANCEY, YOU'RE DISAGREEING WITH ALBERT EINSTEIN? HE SPOKE OF TIME TRAVEL!

NOT TRUE! EINSTEIN SPOKE OF THOERIES OF RELATIVITY WHEREIN "TIME" WOULD SEEM TO SLOW DOWN FOR SOMEONE TRAVELING AT LIGHT-SPEED. BUT THAT PERSON WOULD NEVER CEASE TO EXIST DURING ANY "TIME" PERIOD, NOR WOULD HE OR SHE TRAVEL TO THE "PAST". — THE ENTIRE CONCEPT OF "TIME-TRAVEL" IS RIDDLED WITH THESE PARADOXES! DOESN'T ALL THIS PROVE YOUR IDEAS ARE SHEER FOLLY?! WHAT CAN YOU SAY TO ALL THIS?!

EAT A BUG.

YA, HERR PERTVILLABY- MIT ALL DUE RESPEKT, EAT A BUG. I REMAIN KONVINCED UF DER GÜT PROFESSOR'S THEORIES. I AM GOING T'ROUGH MIT DIS EXPERIMENT!

--UF KOURSE, MINE ONLY KONCERN IS DER PROGRESS UF SCIENCE. IT ISS NOT LIKE ME TO HOG DER GLORY FROM SOME MORE SUITABLE FOLUNTEER --AFTER ALL, I AM ONLY A FEEBLE LITTLE OLD MAN IN HIS LATE 60'S.

KOFF KOFF

WELL THEN, THAT DOES IT! I WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF THIS PREPOSTEROUS IDEA. IT IS MY ONLY RECOURSE TO SAVE YOU FROM YOURSELF!

VHY -- DAT NEFER KROSSED MINE MIND. ... I VILL HAFF TO KONSIDER DIS AT GREAT LENGTH.

AT LONG LAST I HAFF DECIDED DAT YOU ARE RIGHT.

I RESIGN.

CHONK

ZIP!

ALL RIGHT, PROF. KRONOS. LET US GET THIS OVER WITH.

WAIT A SECOND, LANCEY! THIS IS ALL SO EXCITING! BUT LET'S NOT RUSH INTO IT LIKE THIS! I'M SURE PROF. KRONOS' MACHINE WILL WORK, BUT THERE'S ONE PROBLEM...

WHEN YOU GO BACK IN TIME YOU'LL BE IN DANGER OF MATERIALIZING IN SPACE ALREADY OCCUPIED BY SOME OTHER OBJECT! AND EVEN IF YOU AVOID MIXING MOLECULES WITH A ROCK OR A TREE, THERE'S NO AVOIDING THE FACT THAT YOU'LL BE MIXING WITH AIR MOLECULES, AND THE AIR IN JUST YOUR BLOODSTREAM ALONE WOULD KILL YOU INSTANTLY

BY GEORGE, THAT'S TRUE!

BUT I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE ON THIS SILLY →

WE'LL FIRST HAVE TO TRANSPORT A PRESSURE CHAMBER BACK THROUGH TIME WHICH WILL AUTOMATICALLY PUMP ITSELF INTO A VACUUM UPON ARRIVAL. THEN WE'LL EQUIP YOU WITH A SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS AND SEND YOU BACK INTO THE VACUUM CHAMBER.

YES, FEATHER, BUT I WON'T BE GOING BACK IN →

THIS IS HIGHLY INTERESTING! HOW DO YOU SUGGEST WE AVOID MIXING THE CHAMBER OR MR. PERTWILLABY WITH A TREE OR A ROCK OR THE SPANISH ARMADA WHICH WAS DEFEATED IN 1588 BY-ER- WHAT WAS THE QUESTION?

GOLLY, IF WE CAN'T REALLY CONTROL HOW FAR BACK WE SEND HIM, THAT IS A PROBLEM! HOW CAN WE FIND A SPOT SURE TO BE FREE OF ANY OBSTRUCTIONS DURING ANY ERA OF HISTORY?

JUST FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT: I'D SAY THAT COULDN'T BE IN AMERICA. HE MIGHT END UP ALONE, LONG BEFORE CIVILIZATION DISCOVERED THIS CONTINENT. AND THE ONLY FOREIGN COUNTRY WHERE HE WOULDN'T FIND HIMSELF UNABLE TO COMMUNICATE WOULD, OF COURSE, BE ENGLAND. BUT EXACTLY WHERE?

!

THERE'S ONE FITTING LOCALE ON ENGLAND'S SALISBURY PLAIN... A STRUCTURE WITHIN WHICH WE CAN BE ASSURED OF A "FREE SPACE" SINCE THE BRONZE AGE ... OVER FOUR MILLENIA : STONEHENGE!

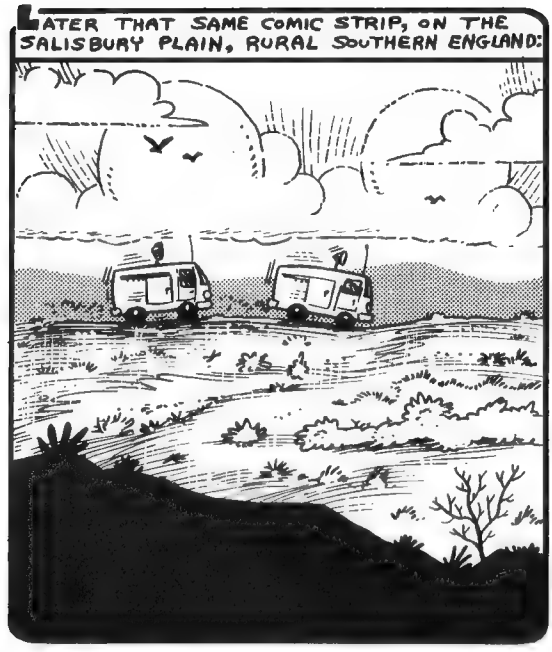
VAIT A MINUTE! DIS ISS GETTING OUT UF HAND! PUT DAT VERDAMDT HELMET ON, PERTVILLABY! IT VILL ALL BE OVER IN AN INSTANT!

PROF. SMYTE! HOW CAN YOU BE SO CARELESS ABOUT LANCEY'S SAFETY?!

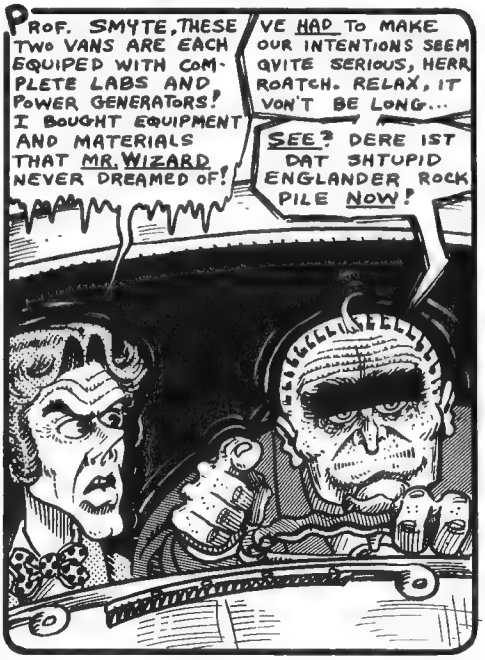
I DO NOT KNOW VHAT KAME OFER ME. I MUST HAFF LOST MINE HEAD. SHAME, OH SHAME ON ME.

THIS IS CAPITAL! I SEE IT ALL NOW! WE'LL PACK UP AND FLY TO ENGLAND THIS VERY NIGHT!
HOLD IT! HOLD IT!!? WHAT'S GOING ON??! PROF. SMYTE?.. YOU'RE LOSING CONTROL OF THIS THING!

GETT OUT DER CHECK BOOK, HERR ROATCH. DER RESULTS VILL BE DER SAME IN DER END-DER DISGRACE FOR PERTVILLABY VILL DOUBTLESSLY BE GREATER! VE VILL FLY TO ENGLAND BOOK 5 FARES ON DER NEXT V-2... ER... JET.
$
DO

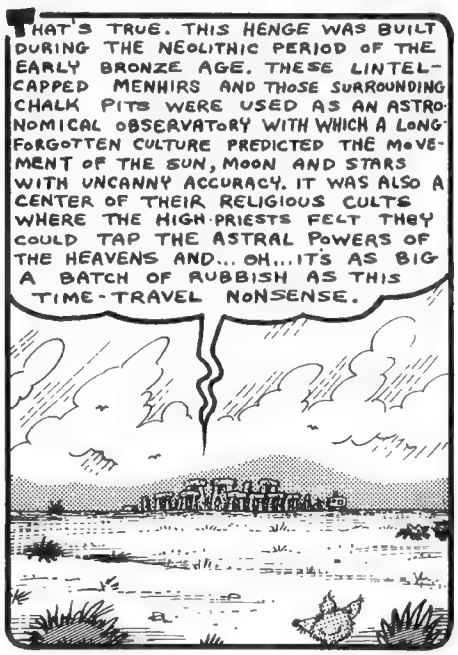

LATER THAT SAME COMIC STRIP, ON THE SALISBURY PLAIN, RURAL SOUTHERN ENGLAND:

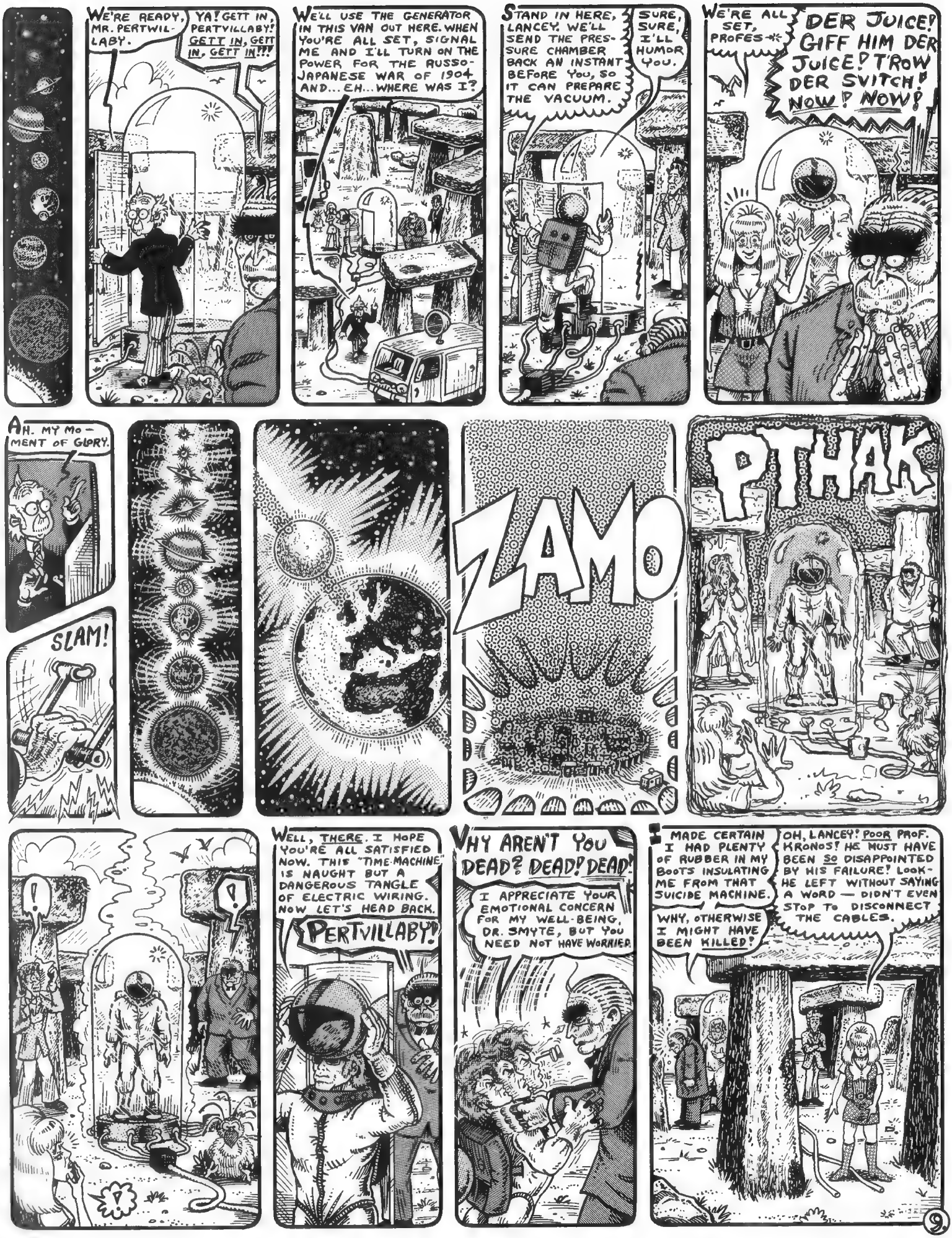
FOR SUCH A FAMOUS LANDMARK, STONEHENGE IS STILL PLEASANTLY REMOTE FROM CIVILIZATION, ISN'T IT, LANCEY?
AND YOU WON'T FIND ANY CRASS GRAFFITI ON THE TRILITHONS. AMERICA IS THE GREATEST COUNTRY IN THE HISTORY OF EARTH, FEATHER, BUT YOU'LL FIND A BIT MORE SOPHISTICATION IN EUROPEAN NATIONS.

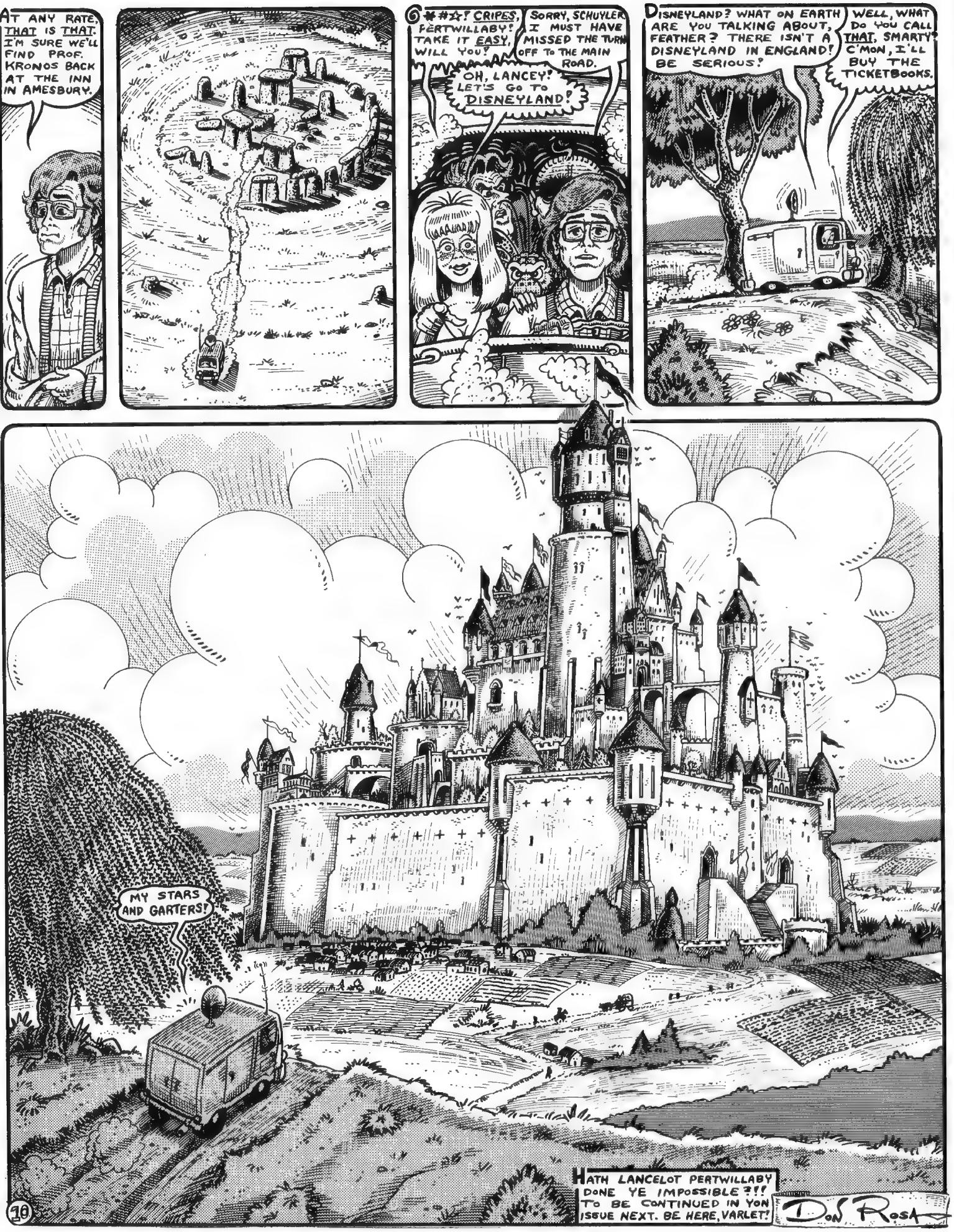

PROF. SMYTE, THESE TWO VANS ARE EACH EQUIPED WITH COMPLETE LABS AND POWER GENERATORS! I BOUGHT EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS THAT MR. WIZARD NEVER DREAMED OF!
VE HAD TO MAKE OUR INTENTIONS SEEM QVITE SERIOUS, HERR ROATCH. RELAX, IT VON'T BE LONG...
SEE? DERE IST DAT SHTUPID ENGLANDER ROCK PILE NOW!

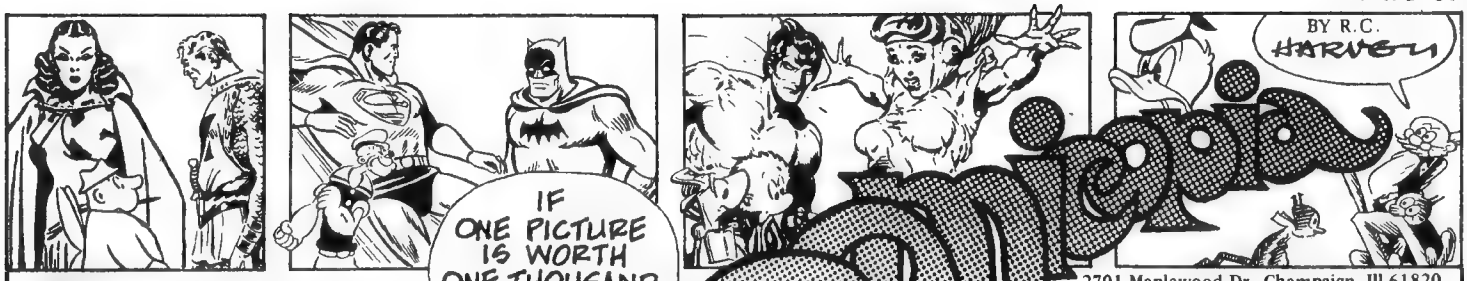
SCHUYLER, I LET YOU SPEND AN ABSURD AMOUNT OF CASH FOR THIS EQUALLY ABSURD ENDEAVOR. I TRUST ITS IMMINENT FAILURE WILL TEACH YOU A LESSON.
YEAH, YEAH, PERTWILLABY. PUT ON YOUR SILLY-SUIT AND SHUT YER YAP.

ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU'LL HAVE ENOUGH AIR, LANCEY?
QUITE. THIS SURPLUS NASA SPACE-SUIT CONTAINS MANY HOURS OF AIR, OF WHICH I'LL NEED JUST A BIT.
WE'LL SET UP THE PRESSURE CHAMBER RIGHT IN THE CENTER OF THE STRUCTURE. THAT'LL ASSURE US OF AN UNOCCUPIED ZONE EXTENDING BACK TO AT LEAST 2000 B.C.!
SQUONK!


THAT'S TRUE. THIS HENGE WAS BUILT DURING THE NEOLITHIC PERIOD OF THE EARLY BRONZE AGE. THESE LINTEL-CAPPED MENHIRS AND THOSE SURROUNDING CHALK PITS WERE USED AS AN ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY WITH WHICH A LONG-FORGOTTEN CULTURE PREDICTED THE MOVEMENT OF THE SUN, MOON AND STARS WITH UNCANNY ACCURACY. IT WAS ALSO A CENTER OF THEIR RELIGIOUS CULTS WHERE THE HIGH-PRIESTS FELT THEY COULD TAP THE ASTRAL POWERS OF THE HEAVENS AND... OH... IT'S AS BIG A BATCH OF RUBBISH AS THIS TIME-TRAVEL NONSENSE.


WE'RE READY, MR. PERTWILLABY.
YA! GETT IN, PERTVILLABY! GETT IN, GETT IN, GETT IN!!!
WE'LL USE THE GENERATOR IN THIS VAN OUT HERE. WHEN YOU'RE ALL SET, SIGNAL ME AND I'LL TURN ON THE POWER FOR THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR OF 1904 AND... EH... WHERE WAS I?
STAND IN HERE, LANCEY. WE'LL SEND THE PRESSURE CHAMBER BACK AN INSTANT BEFORE YOU, SO IT CAN PREPARE THE VACUUM.
SURE, SURE, I'LL HUMOR YOU.
WE'RE ALL SET, PROFES-
DER JUICE! GIFF HIM DER JUICE! T'ROW DER SVITCH! NOW! NOW!
AH. MY MO-MENT OF GLORY.
SLAM!
ZAMO
PTHAK
WELL, THERE. I HOPE YOU'RE ALL SATISFIED NOW. THIS "TIME-MACHINE" IS NAUGHT BUT A DANGEROUS TANGLE OF ELECTRIC WIRING. NOW LET'S HEAD BACK.
PERTVILLABY!
WHY AREN'T YOU DEAD? DEAD! DEAD!
I APPRECIATE YOUR EMOTIONAL CONCERN FOR MY WELL-BEING, DR. SMYTE, BUT YOU NEED NOT HAVE WORRIED.
I MADE CERTAIN I HAD PLENTY OF RUBBER IN MY BOOTS INSULATING ME FROM THAT SUICIDE MACHINE.
WHY, OTHERWISE I MIGHT HAVE BEEN KILLED!
OH, LANCEY! POOR PROF. KRONOS! HE MUST HAVE BEEN SO DISAPPOINTED BY HIS FAILURE! LOOK-HE LEFT WITHOUT SAYING A WORD — DIDN'T EVEN STOP TO DISCONNECT THE CABLES.


AT ANY RATE, THAT IS THAT. I'M SURE WE'LL FIND PROF. KRONOS BACK AT THE INN IN AMESBURY.
#%☆! CRIPES, PERTWILLABY! TAKE IT EASY, WILL YOU?
SORRY, SCHUYLER. I MUST HAVE MISSED THE TURN OFF TO THE MAIN ROAD.
OH, LANCEY! LET'S GO TO DISNEYLAND!
DISNEYLAND? WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, FEATHER? THERE ISN'T A DISNEYLAND IN ENGLAND! BE SERIOUS!
WELL, WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT, SMARTY? C'MON, I'LL BUY THE TICKETBOOKS.
MY STARS AND GARTERS!
HATH LANCELOT PERTWILLABY DONE YE IMPOSSIBLE?!! TO BE CONTINUED IN YON ISSUE NEXT. BE HERE, VARLET!
DON ROSA
78



2701 Maplewood Dr., Champaign, Ill 61820

THEN ON THE NEXT few pages are pictures of enough Caniff cuties to write an entire dictionary. The lexicon of lovelies begins with one of the first of the CANYON years: Delta (below). If Copper Calhoun was Steve's Dragon Lady, Delta was his Burma for the first year of the strip. Vaguely connected to the underworld, Delta supressed her sometimes criminal instincts when her heart throbbed for Canyon. Her place in recent years was taken by Miss Mizzou, that famous blonde with nothing on but a trenchcoat (below). And for a rare look at Mizzou without the trenchcoat, turn the page. (The gal in the middle? From my pen. I confess: I've always wanted one of mine to stand among Caniff's--and this page is about as close as I'll ever get, I'm afraid.)

HA! WITH WHAT WILL YOU CHARGE ME, MIGHTY YANKEE ?
NOTHING! BUT THE COP HOUSE IS THE ONLY PLACE YOU CAN GO AND NOT BE RUBBED OUT BY YOUR PALS WHO ARE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR OIL WELLS!
MILTON CANIFF

MILTON CANIFF is justly celebrated as a master cartoonist. And among his accomplishments is a gal-ery of delightful female (but not always feminine) creations. Two of the most famous belong to the TERRY era: the incomparable Dragon Lady and Burma. They established a Caniff type: the hard-bitten but beautiful woman of mystery and dubious motive. But that woman does not exhaust the Caniff repertory, and on these pages, we take a look at some other Caniff women--all post-1940 inventions, most belonging to the CANYON years. The most spectacularly pneumatic woman of the early CANYON was Madame Lynx (above and facing page). A departure from the usual Caniff villainess (who often developed a heart of gold), Lynx was a completely incorrigible side-winder: flaunting her feminine charms with gravity-defying decolletage throughout September and October of the strip's first year, Lynx intrigued only for herself, never succumbing to Canyon's traditionally redeeming sex appeal, never helping anyone but herself.

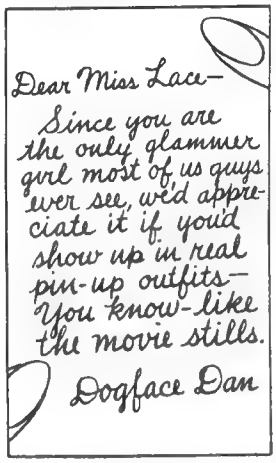
Pity.

And, perched on the stool above, Miss Mizzou --as promised, sans trenchcoat.

QUIT KIDDING, MADAME JONES —I WANT TO GET THIS AIRPLANE SABOTAGED!
WHY DO YOU TH
LED YOU TO THE T
AFTER SHOOTING
WHO WAS ABOU
STAB YOU, CANYON...

GIRLS OF
comicopia

THE ONLY non-CANYON woman on these pages is the inimitable Miss Lace, who adorned the panels of MALE CALL, the strip Caniff created to entertain GIs at home and overseas in base newspapers during World War II. Appearing in 3,000 such publications more-or-less weekly, the strip was laced with military jargon and light-hearted innuendo--and, of course, Lace herself, sexy, worldly-wise, and compassionate (as the strips at the right show). The focus notwithstanding, MALE CALL only occasionally leered. Beginning sometime in 1942, the strip appeared last on March 3, 1946.


Dear Miss Lace-
Since you are the only glammer girl most of us guys ever see, we'd appreciate it if you'd show up in real pin-up outfits- You know-like the movie stills.
Dogface Dan

Caniff can draw a sexy woman; and he can write strips with ample innuendo. But usually the two don't appear in combination--MALE CALL being the exception that proves the rule. A mark of Caniff's sophistication is that when the dialog dilates with double entendre, the women in the accompanying pictures are usually demurely dressed, thereby softening the impact of the language. (Even Madame Lynx wore a trenchcoat on the occasion she tried to seduce Canyon--and that was long before Mizzou transformed the trenchcoat into a chemise.) In adjusting his pictures to temper subtly his suggestive words (and vice versa) Caniff reveals his understanding and

SADDLEPANTS, WE KNOW WHAT YOU DID TO THEM DICE LAST PAYDAY-SEE! IT'S EXPOSED IN 'YANK'!
Y'CAN'T PROVE NUTHIN'!
THAT'S NOT TH' POINT-WE GOT A PROPOSITION! LISTEN...
NEWSMAN
YANK

STEVE CANYON

WHAT YOU NEED IS A WHIFF OF PERFUME...
YUH?
A TOUCH OF SOFT CHEEK...
YUH?
AND SOME SECOND-HAND LIPSTICK...
BLMM...
SEE—YOU'RE NOT FORGOTTEN! THINK THAT'LL KEEP YOU OUT OF THE DITCH?
SLUG.
MILTON CANIFF
I CAN'T GO RUNNIN' AROUND WITH THE GENERALS DRESSED LIKE THIS....
THE M.P.s WOULD CHASE ME (PURELY IN LINE OF DUTY, OF COURSE) IF I WORE THIS....
Dear Dan:
I guess you're stuck with me the way I am—Not pinned-up.
Approximately yours,
Lace

GET WELL FOR LITTLE NELL, DICE!.. COME OUT NATURAL, LIKE A NUDIST, DICE!..A FOUR AND A THREE AND THE BEER'S ON ME!.. SEVEN LACE TO HEAVEN, DICE...

masterful control of the medium. That Caniff is an absolute master of the visual-verbal blending art of the comics surely isn't news. But he is also a master of the purely visual story-telling aspect of the medium. The two strips across the bottom of these pages feature the Duchess of Denver's brief 1951 encounter with Curly Kew, scow skipper. The wordless but visually telling sequence below writes fini to the encounter with typical Caniff humor.

Okay--so I've been lazy this ish: I let the pictures do the talking. But it's not really indolence: all these pictures are reproduced from photo copies, and all the solid blacks had to be painstakingly re-inked. That's more work than typing.

—HARV

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NOTE: "Twilight Of The Heroes" appeared in RBCC #'s 137 and 139-145.

OTHER AVAILABLE BACK ISSUES (Only 1 Or 2 copies of each): #'s 71,84,85,87, 91,92,95,98,99,101,103 (cover creased), 104

#58-60 pages--Fantucchio cover of Capt. America vs. the Red Skull, Oddity Page by Ray Miller, article on Marvel comics, and more.

#106-100 pages--Don Newton cover of The Plantom, "Films Fantastique on THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD, "Wood's World", Information Center by Ray Miller, "The Williamson Collector", Capt. Marvel, Jr. art.

#107-100 pages--Color cover of Capt. Marvel, "Cliff-hangers" on THE SPIDER'S WEB, "The Williamson Collector", "Pulps" on Ray Bradbury (part one), Comic Collector's Comments, Information Center, "Science Fiction in Review", "Wood's World", with part one of a CAPT. SCIENCE reprint.

#120-88pages--Front cover by Steve Fabian of Dr. Fate, "Dr. Fate" article by Ray Miller, "Forbidden Planet: Re-visited", "Pertwillaby Papers" conclusion, EC comics articles, etc.

#121-80 pages--Full color cover by Don Rosa; this special Vaughn Bode memorial issue features an interview with Bode, an analysis of his strip "Sunpot", a retrospective look at Bode's work and career by George Beahm and much more including a great deal of rare, little seen Bode art.

#123-84 pages--Front and back cover by Steve Fabian of scenes from MAXOR OF CIROD, "A Look At Space:1999", "JAWSMANIA STRIKES!", "Maxor" part 2 by J.A. Richardson, werewolf strips drawn by Kerry Gammill and Alan Hanley, report on the Orlandocon, "EC Artist Collector", part 2 of Dell Comics column on "Pogo" and regular features.

#124-84 pages--Two color front cover of Warlock by Bob Susor, back cover of Conan by Mike Zeck; "Subjectivity" part 1; "Maxor" part 3; nine page article on "The Outer Limits"; E.C. Artist Collector, and other regular features.

#125-84 pages--FULL COLOR front and back covers by Wrightson, "Subjectivity" part two, "Maxor" part four, "Kelly-Pogo Portfolio" part one, "Dr. Wertham and the Classics Horror", "E.C. Artist Collector", "Information Center" by Don Rosa, Comic Collector's Comments, Critique, etc.

#129-80 pages--SPECIAL KING KONG ISSUE!!-Front cover by Tom Sutton, back cover by Tod Klein and super centerspread by Robert Kline. Kong articles cover the novel, the comic, the movie, the censored scenes, the remake, and more. Also R.C. Harvey's ZERO HERO, The E.C. Artist Collector, Information Center, Critique, RBCC Poll results, Dell Comics and more.

#130-80 pages--FULL COLOR front cover by Tom Sutton of a sword & sorcery scene in a castle, back cover by Ralph Fowler of a symbolic scene from "2001". First install-ment of Don Rosa's new "Pertwillaby Papers" strip, first "Comicopia", 5 pages of R.C. Harvey's ZERO HERO, article on "The Power of 2001" with unique stills, centerspread of Smaug the dragon by Steve Fabian, five page retelling of PSYCHO with graphic illustrations, index to WDC&S #211-260, "Critique" and more.

#131-84 pages--SPECIAL RAY BRADBURY ISSUE!! - Front cover by Steve Fabian, 2-color back cover by Tom Sutton, centerspread by Mike Zeck, comic strip adaptation of "Time In Thy Flight" by Ron Wilber, and other art by Don Rosa, etc. Many articles on Bradbury including an anotated index to the E.C. comic adaptations.

#132-84 pages--Front cover of Adam Strange by Mike Zeck, back cover of SILENT RUNNING scene by Ralph Fowler. Artist Profile #1 on Mike Zeck, "Adam Strange" article by Howard Siegel with much new art including center-spread and one other page by Tom Sutton as well as another full pager by Mike Zeck. "Films Fantastique" on SILENT RUNNING illustrated by Ralph Fowler.

#133-80 pages--FULL COLOR front cover painting of weird SF scene by FRANK BRUNNER. Back cover of The Destroyer by Mike Zeck. Artist Profile on Steve Fabian.

#135-84 pages-Front cover by Mike Zeck of the Blue Beetle, eight page interview with Tom Sutton including a lot of new artwork, "SPACED: 1998 2/4" by Ron Wilber, Profile on Ron Wilber, conclusion of "The Pertwillaby Papers" by Don Rosa, INFORMATION CENTER, E.C. ARTIST COLLECTOR, etc.

#136-84 pages-Front cover by Mike Zeck and back cover by Dennis Fujitake of The Creeper, article on The Creeper with art by Rosa, Wilber, etc. Eight page SF strip by Fujitake. Artist Profile on Don Rosa. INFORMATION CENTER illustrated by Hilary Barta and more.

#137-80 pages-Front and back covers by Steve Fabian, article by Robert Weinberg on the new writers of the Conan saga. An interview with make-up wizard Rick Baker including stills and a Kerry Gammill illo. ARTIST PROFILE on Kerry Gammill. Part one of "Twilight of the Heroes" by Ron Wilber. Don Rosa's INFORMATION CENTER and more.

#138-80 pages-Front cover by Mike Zeck, back cover by Steve Fabian, both of John Carter of Mars. Article on "John Carter of Comics" with art by Gammill and Hempel. Also 4 pages of THE UNKNOWN WRIGHTSON. Don Rosa's IC plus part one of a new PERTWILLABY PAPERS adventure.

#139-84 pages-[SPECIAL "STAR WARS" ISSUE]- FULL COLOR front cover by RALPH FOWLER, FULL COLOR back cover by Morris Scott Dollens. Spectacular artwork by STEVEN FABIAN, DON ROSA, KERRY GAMMILL (2-page Cantina fight), RON WILBER (4 page satire), and much more! An interview with MARK HAMILL, article on Marvel's STAR WARS comics and more!

#140-84 pages-Front and back covers by Mike Zeck. Feature article on DARK STAR & THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. "Captain Atom", "PERTWILLABY PAPERS", Don Rosa's I.C.

#141-84 pages-Front cover by Kerry Gammill of Hawkman, and back cover by Ron Wilber of John Carter & Tars Tarkas. Article on the Eisnerish series "The Secret Files Of Dr. Drew" plus one of the old strips reprinted from the original art. Also TWILIGHT OF THE HEROES, INFORMATION CENTER, etc.

#142-84 pages-[Special CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND issue] FULL COLOR front cover and FULL COLOR centerspread paintings by Ralph Fowler. CE3K art by Don Rosa, Kerry Gammill, Mark Hempel, Ron Wilber and others. "UFO's in Comics" and more. Also THE PERTWILLABY PAPERS, TWILIGHT OF THE HEROES, CRITIQUE, INFORMATION CENTER, etc.

#144-84 pages-Front cover by Ron Wilber, 2-color back cover by Morris Scott Dollens, 7 page profile on Dollens, article on Tim Kirk, unpublished VAUGHN BODE interview.

#145-84 pages-Kerry Gammill KING KONG cover, Interview with DAVID MICHELINIE, Hembeck artwork, TWILIGHT OF THE HEROES.

#146-84 pages-Wraparound cover and centerspread by WENDY PINI, detailed article on ELFQUEST, complete AVENGERS TV index, "Films Fantastique" on YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN, Don Rosa's Cover Gallery on "The Great DC Gorilla Fetish".

#147-84 pages-Front cover by Marc Hempel, back cover by Mike Zeck. Interviews with DOUG MOENCH and GEORGE CLAYTON JOHNSON. S&S story illustrated by RON WILBER. More.

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FUTURE #1 = $3.50 - 80 pages, lots of color. Features on the early, unused STAR WARS posters. Long article with lots of color repro of S.F. art by Chesley Bonestell. Interview with Fred Pohl and with Douglas Trumbull. Also articles on Rick Baker as well as THE MAN FROM PLANET X.

SCIENCE FICTION HORROR & FANTASY #2 = $2.50 - Not a newsstand pub but just as slick and well produced. Features include articles on STAR WARS, THE MANITOU, METEOR, SUPERMAN, QUARK, INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, RAY BRADBURY, CHRISTOPHER LEE and more including a long interview with DOUGLAS TRUMBULL which includes all of the excellent photos (in color and black & white) which were in the now out-of-print January 1978 issue of the AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER which covered in depth CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND! Also an interview with MARK HAMILL.

NEW

THE STAR WARS ALBUM = $6.00 - The slick 80 page book published by Ballantine which covers the making of STAR WARS with lots of pics, many in color. Front and back covers by Greg and Tim Hildebrandt.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND Souvenir book = $5.00 - This slick booklet was available in a few theatres which CE3K was released in December 1977. Has cast, credits, lots of stills with many in color. Nice.

THE STAR WARS WEEKLY #1-6 = $1.00 each - British oversized weekly comic which reprints the Marvel STAR WARS comic in black & white (Weekly #1&2 = Marvel's STAR WARS #1) plus SF back up strips. These won't last long.

CAPTAIN GEORGE'S WHIZZBANG #16 = $1.00 - Excellent nine page article on the special effects wizardry of the Lydecker brothers (many behind the scenes stills); G-8 AND HIS BATTLE ACES article; "Favorite Films Of 1944"; old comic strips & ads plus reviews of recent books and films and more.

EERIE #2 = $5.00 - Mint condition. I have a limited number of copies of this. Frazetta cover. Excellent early Warren mag.

GRAVE TALES = $2.25 - This book features comic strips, all new, printed on extra heavy stock to be suitable for coloration in any way you want. There's strips by Don Newton, Mike Roberts and Robert Parsons, all in the horror & SF vein. There are also single page illustrations by Don Newton as well as others, including some very fine drawings reprinted from old pulp magazines.

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GOLDEN AGE COLLECTOR #3 = $2.50 - Color cover of Firebrand by Don Newton and five long Golden Age strips. Features Firebrand by Reed Crandall, The Green Lama by Mac Raboy, Space Patrol by Basil Wolverton, Captain Daring by Reed Crandall (printed from the original art), and The Fighting Yank. Back cover is the excellent Mac Raboy cover of GREEN LAMA #2.

GOLDEN AGE #3 = $1.50 - Front and back cover by Don Newton (front in color); EC war comics article by Tom Fagan, seven page article on serials and more.

GOLDEN AGE #4 = $1.25 - Front cover by Don Newton, centerspread by Newton of Spy Smasher, portfolio of pages and covers from EC science fiction comics, Jim Jones drawing of Ming the Merciless, articles on JUNGLE COMICS, Landon Chesney and more.

GOLDEN AGE #5 = $1.25 - Excellent front cover by Don Newton of SF hero in hand to jaw combat with monster, back cover by John Adkins Richardson of Hawkman, articles on TOP NOTCH comics, Cary Bates, Forrest Ackerman and others. Numerous illustrations by Don Newton.

GOLDEN AGE #6 = $1.25 - Centerspread by John Adkins Richardson of the Fantastic Four, three page portfolio by Robert Kline of heroes from CLUE COMICS, reprints of excellent art from Spanish comics, "Tyzor The Prehistoric Man" strip by Jim Chase and more.

GOLDEN AGE #7 = $2.00 - Wraparound color cover of Tarzan by Don Newton, fantastic six page Richard Corben portfolio "The World Of Conan", in-depth interview with John Adkins Richardson, "Mnemo, Son Of Little Nemo, In Nostalgi" is a beautiful nine page strip by John Richardson featuring all of the Golden Age greats, serial article on "Rocketman" by Earl Blair, more art by Newton, Mason, Richardson, etc.

ILLUSTRATED COMIC COLLECTORS HANDBOOK Vol. 2 = $1.25, Vol. 3 = $1.50, Vol. 4 = $1.25 - Capsule histories and illustrations of Golden Age heroes, both the well known and the very obscure. The first two volumes include art by Fantucchio, and the final volume has art by Newton and Richardson as well as cover reproductions.

TARZAN = $1.25 - Full color poster by Don Newton, 11 X 17.

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John Steele#1,Giolitti art,.75
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Amazing World of Superman,Metropolis Ed.,$4
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Doctora Corazon#272('63);#294('64);#295('64) (stories told in pictures...)
Domingos Alegres#503('63,Turok);#509('63; Magnus);#526('64;Magnus)
Entre Fieras#80('63;Vooda,Princess of Jungle)
Los 4 Fantasticos#15('63,Fantastic Four); #16('63,FF);#18('64,FF);#19('64,Strange Tales Human Torch reprint).
El Halcon Negro(Blackhawk)#192('63);#198('63), 203('64). These are not reprints but are new material produced in Mexico-perhaps unauthorized.
Historias Fantasticas#98('64,Strange Sports Stories reprint)
Historietas#650('63;reprint of an E.C. WAR title;art by Wood,Severin,Davis)$5
Marvila#103('64,Atom reprint)
Mi Gran Aventura#33('63,My Greatest Adventure reprint; cover loose)
Misterios del Gatonegro#163(Antman)
Neutron#90('63),101('64) in pictures(photos)
Robin Hood#2('63)
El Sorprendente Hombre Arana#10(Spiderman), #11(Antman)
Titanes Planetarios#166('63;Adam Strange), #184('64;Atomic Knights)
Young Men or Men's Adventures coverless reprint in Spanish;Human Torch by Ayers, Capt. America by Romita;Subby by Everett.$3.

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Famous Monsters Yearbook 1962(G),$7;1970,no title logo,$2.
Famous Monsters Make-Up Handbook,'65,M,$10.
Fantastic Monsters of the Films vol.1#2,6, vol.2#1(all missing title logos),@@3.50.
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Savage Tales#1(NM),$30;#1(G),$25;#2,$10; #3,$6;#5,$5;
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Gallery Feb.,Mar.,July,'73,all VG,@@2
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Oui Feb.-May,July,'73,all M,@@3
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C. Siodmak: "Donovan's Brain",$2
Tarzan: Ace Editions,@@3,Frazetta covers, "Son of Tarzan","Beasts of Tarzan","Jewels of Opar","City of Gold"
Ballantine Editions,@@2,"Tarzan of the Apes","Jungle Tales of Tarzan"
Gold Star Editions by Barton Werper,@@5, "Silver Globe","Cave City","Snake People"
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PULPS/DIGESTS:
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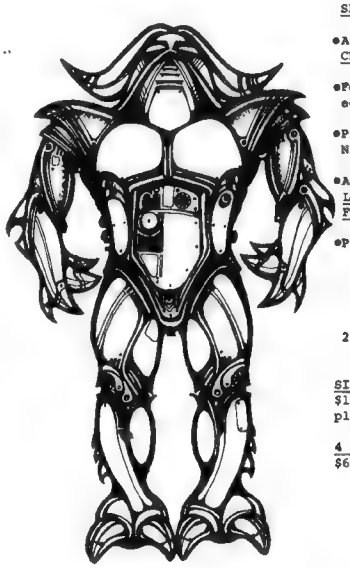

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3/2/48
(Philip Morris)
THE LIFE OF RILEY
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107R -

107R - JACK BENNY SHOW
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AMOS & ANDY 10,000th SHOW
(Rexall)

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"The Stopped Watch Caper"
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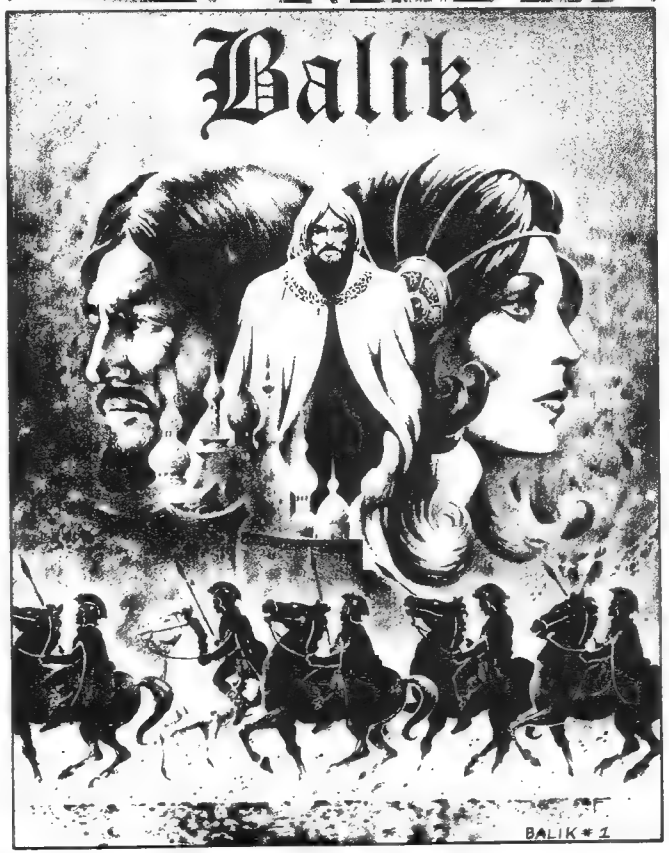

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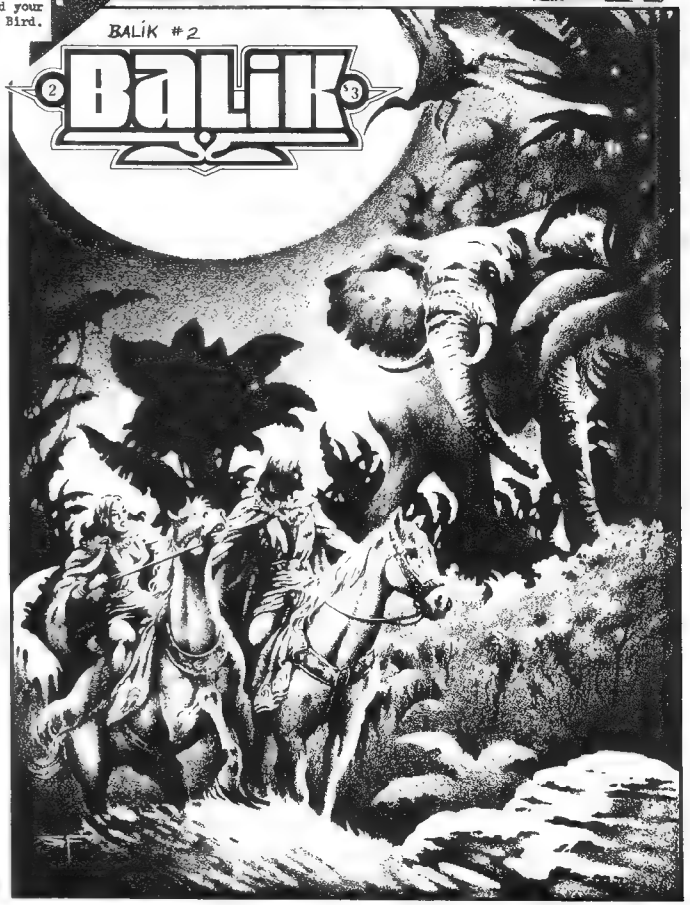

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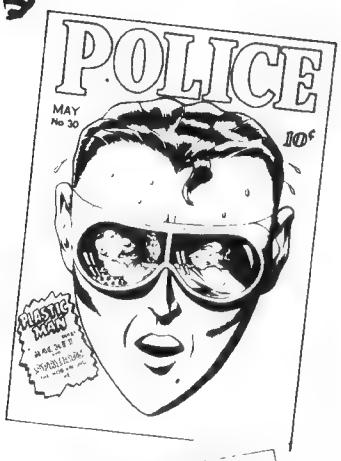

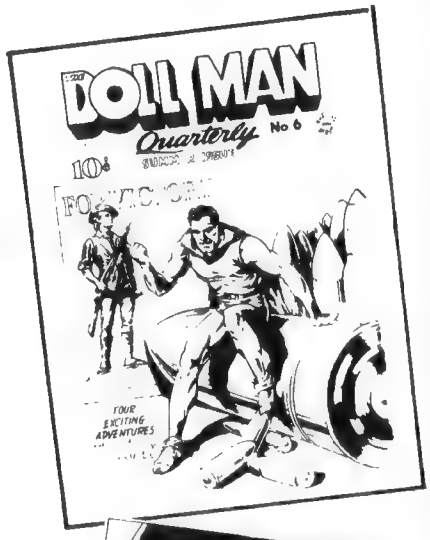

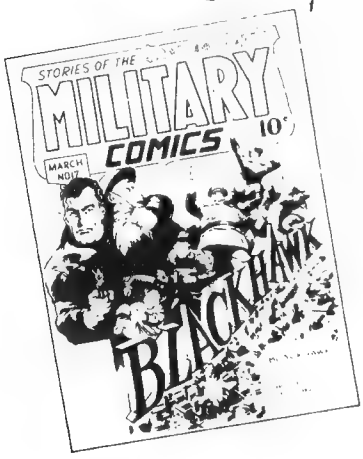

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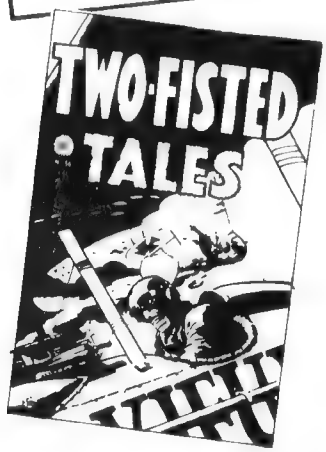

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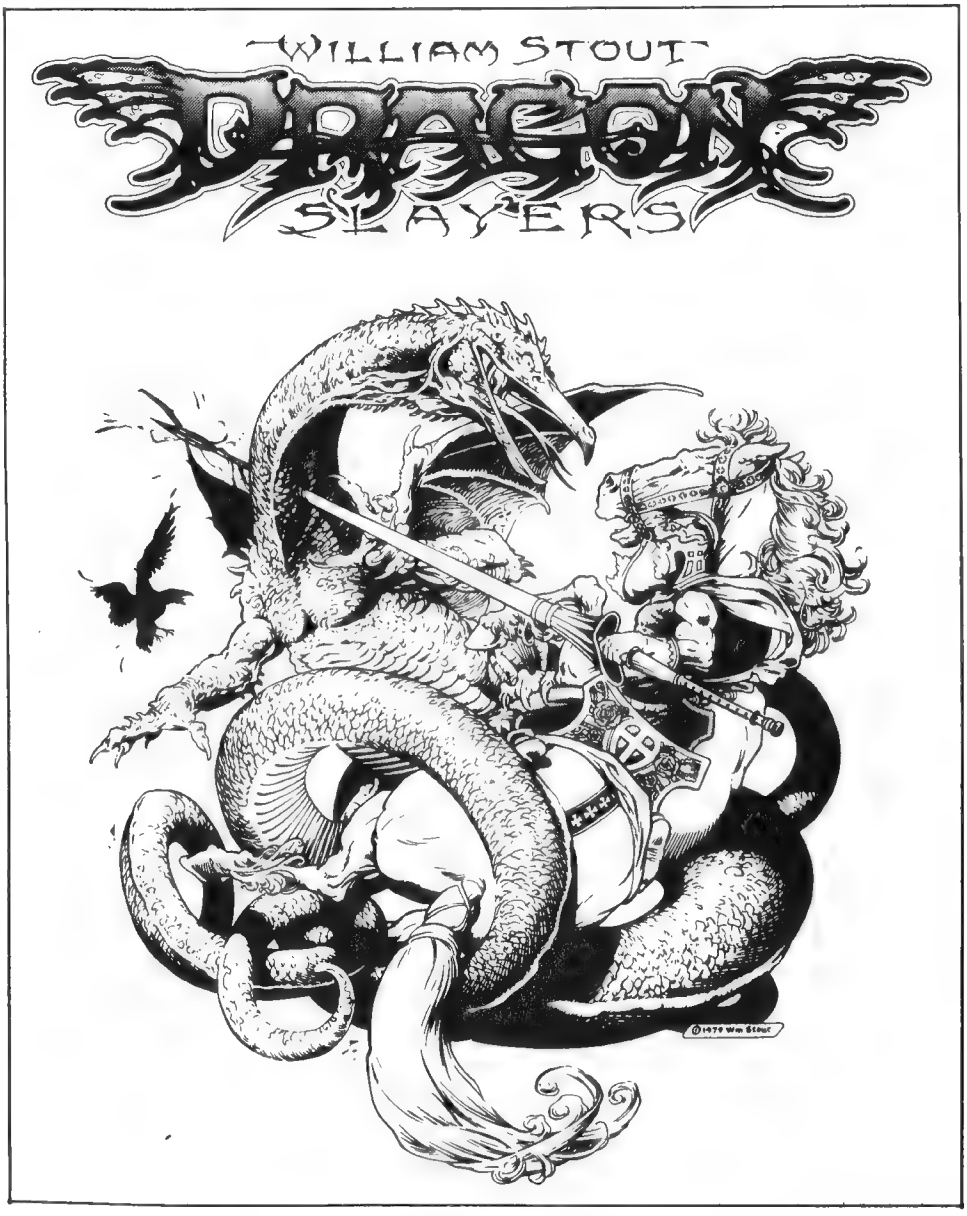

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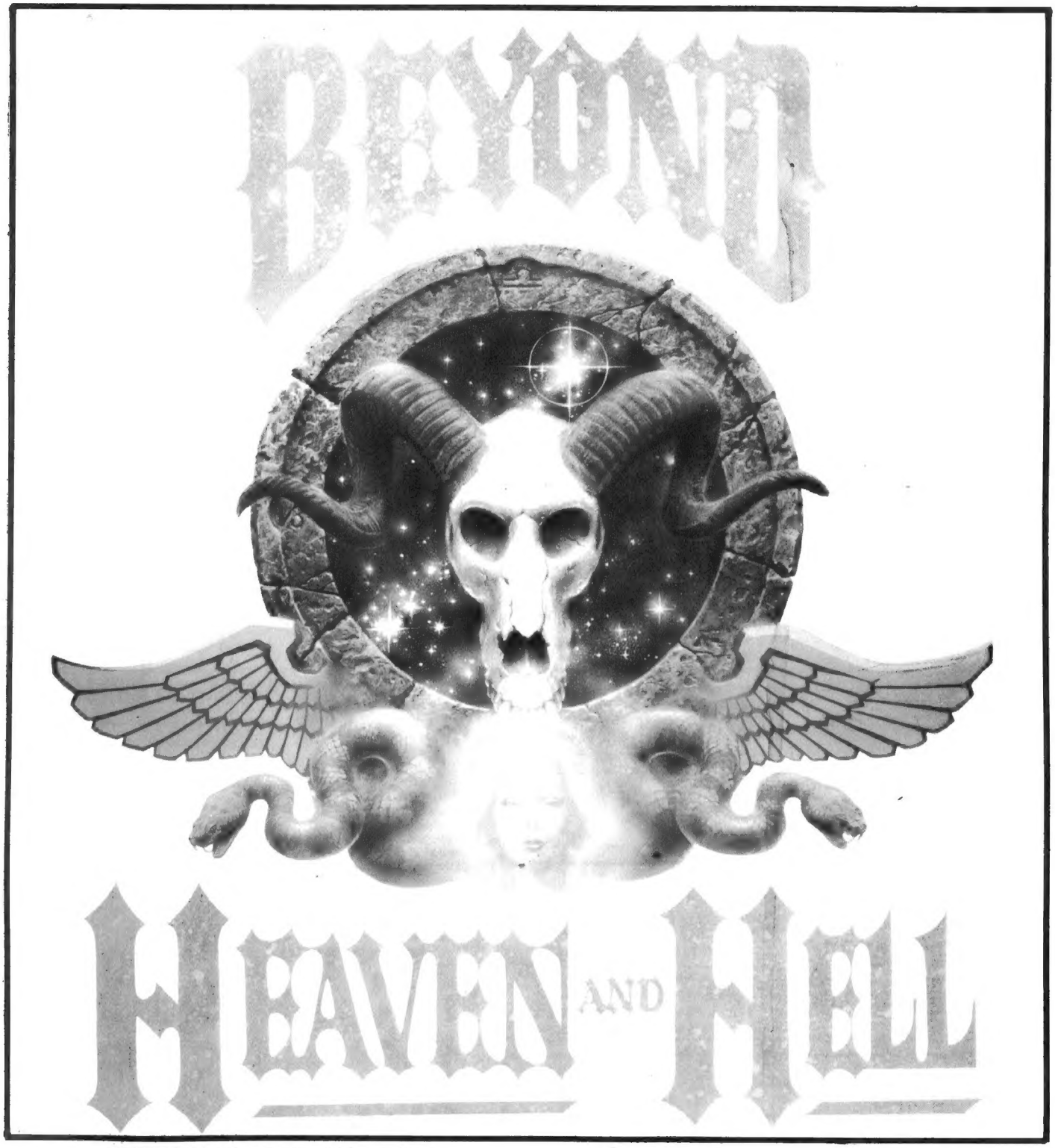

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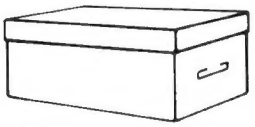

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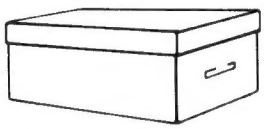

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* Collection Boxes are made of a sturdy 200 lb. test cardboard, with a white exterior and a brown interior.
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* Boxes and lids are shipped flat via U.P.S.

COLLECTION INVENTORY CARDS

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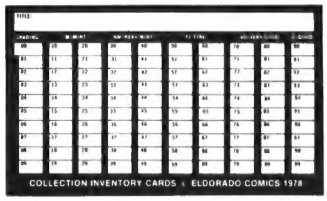

* Each card can index & list the individual conditions of 100 comic books or magazines.
* For titles over 100 issues, enter the appropriate digit to the left of the 00 in the upper left box.
* For unwanted issues, place an X in the appropriate issue number box.
* Use the reverse side of the card to list information about special issues, etc.
* Collection Inventory Cards measure 3" by 5", and are easily stored in a small file box.

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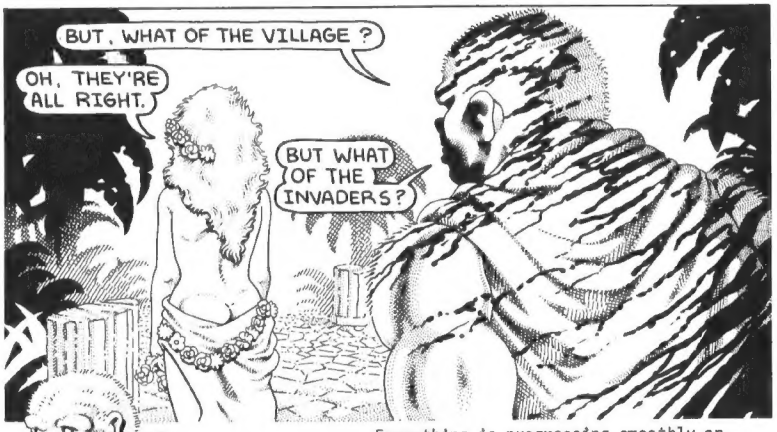
From The People Who Bring You The "RBCC"

IT'S SO LOVELY HERE. SO PEACEFUL.
RAUM'S FACE BROKE INTO A CARICATURE OF A GRIN BUT IT WAS AS CLOSE AS AN OGRE COULD COME. RONWIL UNDERSTOOD AND GRINNED BACK.



FANTASTIC EXPLOITS!

UPDATE

Everything is progressing smoothly on the first issue of FANTASTIC EXPLOITS. There will be an approximately 30 day delay, though, but it is for a very good reason. RON WILBER is working steadily on the strip "Something Lost, Something Never Found" and will not be able to complete it by the April 1st deadline I had originally given him. Why will it take him so much longer? Well, besides the fact that Ron is making it his finest work to date (as the panels above testify to), it will also be the longest strip Ron has ever drawn. At the time of the first FANTASTIC EXPLOITS ad, Ron had only just begun the strip and thus couldn't at that time give me a final page count on it, but now he can. Ron's strip will run 44 pages and will be published complete in the first issue of FANTASTIC EXPLOITS! This will necessitate that Kerry Gammill's "Subjectivity" be reprinted in FE#2 instead, but this is good too because it will enable me to do something special for that strip that I wouldn't have been able to do in #1, but more on that in the next UPDATE! Kerry's full color painting for FE#1's wraparound cover is coming along well and will be completed by the time you read this, and Ron's strip probably will be as well. FE has some exciting things in store that there isn't room to do in the RBCC, and I really think you'll like them.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

(Note: These are special introductory rates only. Sub rates will increase to the normal level upon publication of FANTASTIC EXPLOITS #1 in May).

THIRD CLASS: 5/$12.50, 10/$24.00, 15/$36.00, 20/$45.00
FIRST CLASS: 5/$18.00, 10/$34.00, 15/$46.00, 20/$55.00

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